Commentary

Volume Seventy, Number Four, October 1980

Reagan & the Republican Revival

James Q. Wilson

Containment for the 80's Walter Laqueur

The Jewish Argument with God Abraham Kaplan

The Three Mile Shadow Roger Starr

Radical Historians James Nuechterlein

Versions of Walter Lippmann Kenneth S. Lynn

Singing the Same Old Songs Pearl K. Bell

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Werner J. Dannhauser / Elliott Abrams / Dorothy Rabinowitz / Jeffrey Marsh / Renee Winegarten

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No. 8 in a Series
Subject: Maximizing
Volumetric Efficiency

8

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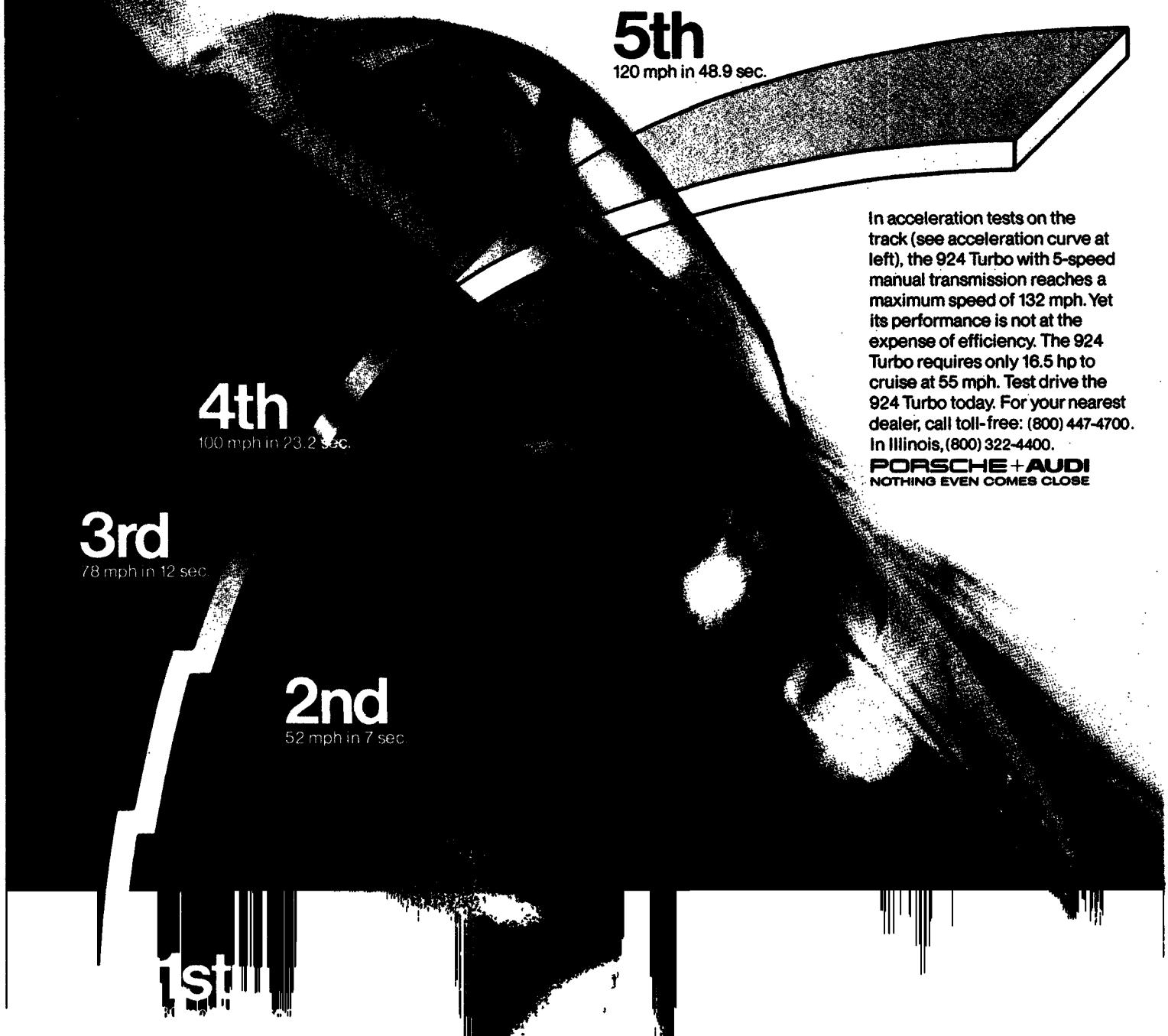

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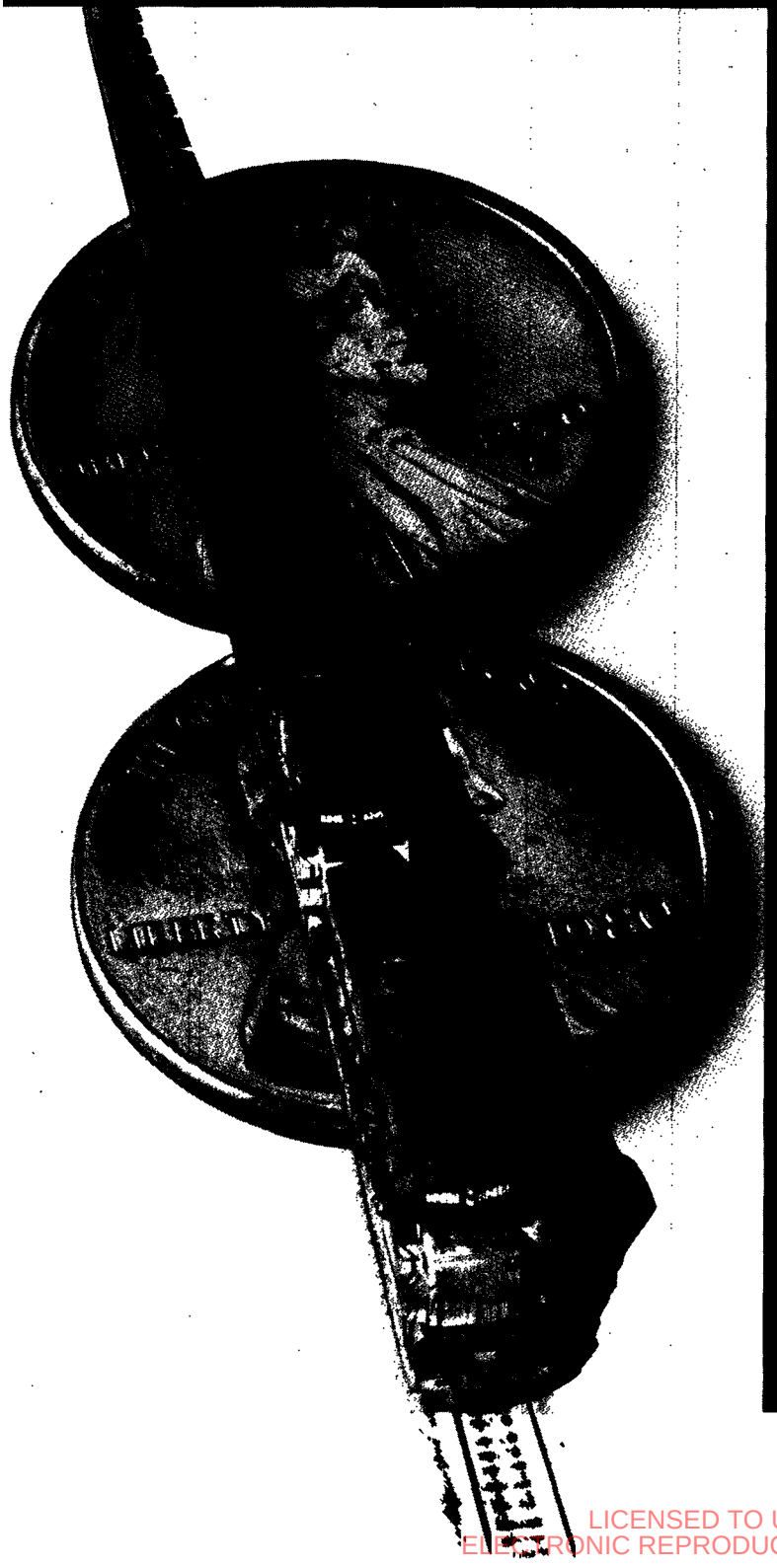

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Commentary

VOLUME 70 NUMBER FOUR *OCTOBER 1980*

Articles	25	Reagan and the Republican Revival *James Q. Wilson*
	33	Containment for the 80's *Walter Laqueur*
	43	The Jewish Argument with God *Abraham Kaplan*
	48	The Three Mile Shadow *Roger Starr*
	56	Radical Historians *James Nuechterlein*
Observations	65	Versions of Walter Lippmann *Kenneth S. Lynn*
Fiction	70	Singing the Same Old Songs *Pearl K. Bell*
Letters	4	from *Peter W. Rodman, Charles Horner, Peter Barglow, Maxwell H. Soll, Hal J. Breen, Katherine O'Brien, Howard Golden, William C. Offenkrantz, Isaac Rebner, Seymour Fisher, Roger P. Greenberg, Frederick Crews, Jonathan B. Bingham, Richard Pipes,* and others
Books in Review	74	Philosophy and Public Policy, by Sidney Hook *Werner J. Dannhauser*
	77	The Lean Years, by Richard Barnet *Elliott Abrams*
	80	Helen and Teacher, by Joseph P. Lash *Dorothy Rabinowitz*
	82	Of Blood and Hope, by Samuel Pisar *Jeffrey Marsh*
	86	Orwell: The Transformation, by Peter Stansky and William Abrahams *Renee Winegarten*

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Letters from Readers

Vietnam & Foreign Policy

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Charles Horner's reply to Benjamin Novak's letter on Vietnam [Letters from Readers, August] is a brilliant and moving statement of the moral meaning of our Vietnam experience. Mr. Horner is surely right that a terrible price is being paid even now for America's failure. His very eloquence on this subject, indeed, compels me to chide him for his disparaging remarks later in the same issue on recent books by Nixon and Kissinger [in his review of Nixon's *The Real War*]. I served on the National Security Council staff during the Nixon administration and have a somewhat different recollection of those times. In fact, I think it is Mr. Horner who may have succumbed to the sin of which he accuses those eminent authors: of rewriting the past.

"Nixon and Kissinger now sound like some of their critics of a decade ago," Mr. Horner writes skeptically, in their warnings of danger. Which critics? I do not know where Mr. Horner was ten years ago, but I do know that COMMENTARY in 1970 was among the fashionable intelligentsia majority attacking the Nixon administration *from the Left*. Maurice J. Goldbloom, assessing "Nixon So Far" [March 1970], upbraided the administration for its laxity in pursuing SALT, its dangerous decisions to deploy MIRV's and an ABM, and its skepticism of Brandt's *Ostpolitik*; he also looked forward optimistically to a European Security Conference. Norman Podhoretz was frequently and bitterly denouncing the "wanton" American involvement in Vietnam [e.g., "First Things, and Last," July 1970]. The next year he decided that an American defeat was preferable to continuation of the war ["A Note on Vietnamization," May 1971].

Every strategic-weapons program we have now is the product of decisions made by the Nixon and Ford administrations over congressional, media, and academic opposition: Trident, MX, MIRV deployments, the cruise missile, the Mk12A warhead (not to mention the B-1 bomber, which we don't have now). And it is impossible to separate Vietnam so easily from these other concerns. It was Nixon and Kissinger who persisted in pursuing an honorable outcome because they felt that a collapse in Indochina would not only doom millions to Communist tyranny but would also have disastrous ramifications—political, military, and psychological—far beyond Southeast Asia. They were convinced that American abdication would embolden adversaries and demoralize friends on every continent; at home it would be used to discredit all military programs, aid to allies, and our world leadership generally, further confirming foreign impressions that the acceptance of defeat marked not a local setback but a sea change in the American attitude to foreign involvement. They were not wrong. The era of American geopolitical retreat dates from 1975, not 1969. In 1975 even such a stalwart supporter of a strong policy as Senator Henry Jackson found it impolitic to support aid to Angola in the year of Vietnam's collapse. (He also opposed aid to Vietnam in early 1975.) The entire foreign policy of the Carter administration is, in a sense, part of the price we are paying for the Vietnam debacle and its seeming vindication of the anti-war position (as effectively demonstrated in COMMENTARY by Carl Gershman ["The Rise & Fall of the New Foreign-Policy Establishment," July]).

COMMENTARY, to be sure, continually and valiantly took issue with the Noam Chomskys, Mary McCarthys, and I.F. Stones who despised American leadership in the world. COMMENTARY's more moderate view seemed to be that American world leadership was indeed crucial, but that it could survive even after, or perhaps only after, the unconditional liquidation of the Vietnam enterprise. This was, to use a favorite word of the current lexicon, naive.

In 1980, COMMENTARY is making an enormous intellectual contribution to the revival of an effective American foreign policy. The magazine deserves applause and even gratitude. Debates over the policies of ten years ago are a bit tricky, however; perhaps they touch sensitive nerves all around. Steering clear of psychoanalytic explanations, especially after reading Frederick Crews ["Analysis Terminable," July], I nevertheless wonder about this strange compulsion to denounce as too soft, ten years later, an administration that at the

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EXTRAORDINARY TASTE BY HAIG & HAIG

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time (one perhaps uncomfortably recalls) one was denouncing as too bellicose.

PETER W. RODMAN
Washington, D.C.

CHARLES HORNER writes:

I thank Peter W. Rodman for his generous comment about my reply to Benjamin Novak. Mr. Rodman has managed to find in my review of President Nixon's book, *The Real War*, a pretext for criticizing the content of articles that appeared in this magazine during 1970 and 1971. I can only assume that it was my use of the phrase "critics of a decade ago" which caused Mr. Rodman to conclude that I was referring to critics of the Nixon policies who attacked from the Left. I do think, however, that the context of the review made clear that the critics in question were those who expressed concern over the conduct of Soviet-American relations from, let us say, the 1972 Moscow summit and after. I suspect Mr. Rodman understands this, just as I understand why he would prefer that the argument be drawn off in a different direction.

Though I should regret not having been more precise in my chronology, I am not displeased that Mr. Rodman seizes upon it to call attention to the flaws in the so-called anti-war argument. Indeed, the phenomenon Mr. Rodman mentions in his closing sentence was also discussed by me in passing in a review of William Shawcross's book, *Sideshow* [COMMENTARY, August 1979]. None of this is surprising. Just as President Nixon and his associates are reluctant to embrace a "revisionist view" of their détente policies—though the facts tend increasingly to compel it—critics of the Vietnam war are reluctant to see events in Southeast Asia after May 1975 as a basis for disowning their older positions. The rationalizations in both cases become artful and elaborate. In the first instance they can lead to disingenuous books like *The Real War*. In the second, they lead almost invariably to silence.

Psychoanalysis

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Frederick Crews has tried to exorcise psychoanalysis many times: he has written it out of his system, has lectured against it, and now once more, in "Analysis Terminable" [July], he wishes to expose its "exploded pretensions." Has he succeeded? Why then does he have to do it over, and over, and over again? . . . . And if he hasn't succeeded in fully purging his intellect of psychoanalysis, it may be because it is an illuminating truth rather than a deadening opiate. . . .

Freud established around 1900 a mechanistic model of the mind compatible with contemporary German physics and neurology (Helmholz, Meynert, Wernicke). But by 1915, while retaining his conviction that psychology could be reduced eventually to physical forces and energies, his experience with patients led him increasingly to an intentionalistic, anthropomorphic emphasis characterized by purposive, meaning-creating, decision-making entities. Mr. Crews, when he refers to Freud's "mechanistic trifurcated" model, doesn't understand that by 1923 the tripartite model (id, ego, superego) had already been thoroughly humanized. Psychoanalytic theory has retained this original duality and continues to be both an interpretive humanistic discipline and a pragmatic theory of causal explanation and logical deduction. . . .

Can analytic theory be considered scientific? If science is to be defined not by its subject matter, but by a pragmatic, skeptical, realistic attitude and approach, then psychoanalysis certainly qualifies as science. However, the crucial importance of interpretation within the treatment situation gives analysis a scientific status clearly different from that of the natural sciences. . . . Interpretation aims more at explanatory power and capacity to expand meaning than at absolute validity. For this reason, our field has seen a Jung and a Melanie Klein. Interpretation of analytic experience may resemble historical understanding or biblical exegesis more than explanation in natural science. But there are clear criteria for evaluating analytic explanations: appropriateness, self-consistency, coherence, comprehensiveness, and accuracy as judged by the ability to yield some prediction of behavior. Accuracy of interpretation can further be judged by various methods: public behavior, the analyst's clinical experience and beliefs about human nature and personality theories, evidence of a patient's movement to complete thwarted psychic development, or the recovery of corroborating childhood memories. General natural-science theories achieve accuracy when validated through repeated applications to real initial conditions that, once proved, are binding for all knowledgeable researchers. General analytic interpretations, while capable of sharing with general theories the possibility of causal explanation and conditional prediction, can be tested ultimately only by the patient's self-reflection and participation in the inquiry within the communication network between patient and analyst.

The criterion for empirical validity that Mr. Crews requires for psychoanalysis is not always applicable even in the realm of hard science. Several philosophers of science question the existence of any scientific method that can invariably generate and justify valid theory. (See e.g., the writings of Putnam, Kuhn, Peirce, and Habermas.) Scientific truth legitimately can be defined as those agreements which are shared by members of a scientific community of trained observers who have freedom of inquiry and discourse in an open society. Psychoanalytic theories have changed and evolved in a manner consistent with such a concept of science. For example, consider the analytic theories of female psychology: many researchers now maintain that female analysts have an advantageous observational position for discerning women's fundamental psychodynamics. Scientifically trained women were underrepresented in Freud's medical-intellectual environment and the objectivity of analysts such as Mack-Brunswick and Deutsch was compromised by their admiration of Freud. Today, fifty years later, biological discoveries and child observational data, distance from Freud, and the influx of sophisticated women analytic observers have produced quite a different feminine psychology.

Such historical factors have shaped the constantly changing curriculum of Freudian analytic institutes. These training centers have strict academic standards. Prospective applicants are meticulously scrutinized and their work with patients supervised before, during, and after a personal psychoanalysis. Candidates have had a rigorous natural-science background and almost all are both physicians and psychiatrists. In response to Mr. Crews's allegation that the prestige of analysis within psychiatry has declined, it should

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be pointed out that the director of the National Institute of Mental Health, and the president and the medical director of the American Psychiatric Association, are all analysts, even if, like other scientific leaders, they have widely varying intellectual postures and activities.

Mr. Crews's allegation that analysis is no more effective than competing psychotherapies deserves a few brief words, although the validity of psychoanalytic theory is not connected historically or epistemologically to psychoanalytic treatment. It is true that conclusive evidence showing which treatments are optimal for which diagnostic categories of patients while involving the smallest risk of damage is unavailable. But for many specific mild and severe psychological disorders, analysis is still the treatment of choice. A method with an emphasis on prolonged, painstaking investigation must have a greater potential for creating permanent intra-psychic personality change than a short-term, short-cut talking therapy. . . .

Mr. Crews further tries to disqualify psychoanalysis as an empirical enterprise by attempting to make an object lesson out of the influential Heinz Kohut, who is depicted as a kind of pope ruling a hierarchy of believers through force of personal office, and as a villain of the old order rather than as the originator of fresh insights. Mr. Crews distorts a 1957 comment of Kohut's evaluating the possible basis of Freud's bias concerning female sexuality, and changes it into a position of support for the central importance of penis envy. Kohut noted that Freud, as always, relied on clinical data, and the Victorian women analytic patients of early 20th-century Vienna did report such phallic concerns frequently. Of course, Mr. Crews chooses to ignore an article Kohut wrote almost two decades later in which he denies the nuclear significance of penis envy ("A Note on Female Sexuality," in *The Search for the Self*, Paul Ornstein, ed., Basic Books, 1975). . . .

Kohut's other crimes are an emphasis on the scientific use of empathy and introspection to examine the data of the clinical situation (what better way is there to study the therapeutic process?), and his idealization of Freud. In science it is not embarrassing to admire a distinguished predecessor, even if you disagree with many aspects of his theories. Did Einstein not value Newton and Newton not praise Galileo? Most analysts and many scholars, historians, and social scientists find Kohut's contribution valuable and persuasive, and I agree with this evaluation. But Kohut himself constantly warns against premature closure and would be the last one to claim the final psychoanalytic word. Readers can readily evaluate his theories and the evidence in case studies by reading Kohut's books and his extensive collected papers, publication of which Mr. Crews attributes to self-congratulatory motives rather than to the wish to share with the larger community of scholars the experience and knowledge obtained from almost half a century of treating patients through psychoanalysis.

But let us leave the *ad hominem* attack Mr. Crews makes to discredit psychoanalysis and return to the question of its scientific status. Mr. Crews states that analysis has received only "trifling and debatable corroboration. . . ." Yet the full-time researchers he himself cites, . . . Fisher and Greenberg, conclude about Freud: "He seems to have been right about a respectable number of issues." . . . Many other empirical verifications of analytic formulations are being done presently or have been completed. To illustrate these, I will list only a few representative analytic investigations performed in Chicago: the Alexander-Pollock Psychosomatic Specificity studies; the Offer longitudinal work on adolescent homosexual or heterosexual identification (with findings different from Freud's); the Benedek and Rubinstein work correlating analytic data with phases of the menstrual cycle; the Hawkins study of depression, physiology, and dreams; Fajardo's cross-cultural videotape examination of mother-infant rhythmicity; and the Grinker work on stress research.

Statistical empirical research using data obtained in the analytic treatment situation is limited by the requirements of patient privacy and confidentiality, and by

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ABRAHAM'S JOURNEY

A radiant image of the Jewish heritage

The editors of COMMENTARY are proud to offer a remarkable work of art: *Abraham's Journey* by the American artist Joan Hall. This original silkscreen/lithograph, in a limited edition of only two hundred fifty impressions, is now being made available exclusively through COMMENTARY in a once-in-a-lifetime offering.

A collage of images from great museums and archives

Abraham's Journey is a colorful and sophisticated panorama of the Jewish journey through history, from the Bible to the present day. Here in one collage are twenty of the most evocative images of the Jewish experience to be found in the collections of great museums around the world. Among the eminent institutions contributing to this documentary art project are the YIVO Institute For Jewish Research, the British Museum, Leo Baeck Institute, Bibliothèque Nationale, and Central Zionist Archive, Jerusalem.

Painstakingly assembled through a research project that occupied several years of work, *Abraham's Journey* artfully combines manuscript illuminations, engravings, and photographs with original calligraphy and brush work. The result is a composition awash in bold colors and vibrant with the full sweep and meaning of Jewish history.

Forty centuries of Jewish experience

In striking visual detail, *Abraham's Journey* surveys four thousand years of Jewish religious tradition, cultural achievement, and contributions to Western civilization. The wanderings of the patriarch Abraham. The Twelve Tribes around the Ark of the Covenant. The Scroll of the Law. Medieval rabbis engaged in religious discussion. Polish cheder boys at study. Engraved portraits of Moses Maimonides and Moses Mendelssohn, and an excerpt from Sigmund Freud's famous letter to the B'nai B'rith.

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A richly talented artist

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250 Abraham's Journey

Art Spiegelman

ACTUAL SIZE 24 x 36" (61 x 66.4 CM) EDITION: 250
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the danger that research investigations may compromise the primary therapeutic intent. Voice recordings, verbatim notes, and movies are distant from live human interactional experience. . . . Gill and his co-workers, who have studied psychoanalysis with the above-mentioned methods for many years, have defined the advantages and problems of such assessment. . . .

With what does Mr. Crews intend to replace psychoanalysis as the major tool in the psychological understanding of the humanities and the social sciences? His allusions to "decisive advances" in the knowledge of brain neurology and physiology reveal a surprising naiveté for a budding scientist. Herbert Simon, the well-known social scientist, summarizing the status of behavioral and social science, stated only recently (*Science,* July 1980): "Since the human mind resides in the brain, we cannot be satisfied with our explanations of human thinking until we can specify the neural substrates for the elementary information processes of the human symbol system. *Of these connections we know next to nothing*" (my emphasis). Yet Mr. Crews, in bending over backward to avoid "recourse to instant depth," condemns himself to learning about only the manifest surface phenomena of psychology that are fully available to scientific experimentation.

To guide us Mr. Crews recommends we read philosophy professor Adolf Grünbaum, who he threatens will soon place me in the ranks of the unemployed by declaring psychoanalysis a pseudo-science. Grünbaum's major contribution, "Epistemological Liabilities of the Clinical Appraisal of Psychoanalytic Theory" (*Psychoanalysis and Contemporary Thought,* 2, 1979), so far fortunately falls far short of this ambition. It is a thoughtful piece, featuring, however, the tendencies toward the "either/or," two-alternative thinking which is characteristic of many theoreticians of behavioral psychology. Using an orthodox medical model, Grünbaum asks the question, what constitutes cure? He reasons as follows: when a physician gives a pill which produces a symptomatic cure, this can either be explained by the action of "characteristic" factors that are causally relevant and essential or by "incidental" factors that are irrelevant and illusionary, like the influence of suggestion or belief (the placebo effect). But the sharpness of this distinction between the two classes of factors is blurred in the special process of psychoanalysis and the hermeneutic component of a cure is excluded a priori.

Eysenck, the behaviorist and ancient foe of psychoanalysis, whom Mr. Crews mentions and who is cited by Grünbaum, pioneered the either/or simplification, using Eddington's famous table example to demonstrate the contrast between two kinds of psychological thinking with two (incompatible) approaches. For him there is the scientific table comprised of precisely known molecules, atoms, and electrons which Eysenck claims for himself, and then there is the sensible table of the ordinary everyday world, which he generously donates to psychoanalytic theory. The scientific table symbolizes behavioral psychology which *explains* human conduct scientifically through proof and verification, and the analytic table represents an inferior common-sense psychology which *understands* personality using non-scientific belief and faith. Ironically, of course, the entire conception of the nucleus of the atom when Eysenck used the above metaphor has changed. . . . It now looks more like a swarm of bees than like a drop of liquid.

Bohr and Heisenberg, in their emphasis upon the necessity of including the observer in the exact description of the observed, have moved the theoretical perspectives of physics and psychoanalysis closer together. In any case, can we ever allow physicists or Grünbaum, Eysenck, and Crews to define what is absolute "scientific" truth about the human being?

But even more perplexing for me is how Mr. Crews's scientific psychology can be applied to the humanities. . . . How can the man who once interpreted literature with such amusing parody, using Jungian, Marxist, Freudian, and religious frameworks in *The Pooh Perplex,* apply behavioral psychology to the marvelous creative products of the centuries? Now that Mr. Crews has glimpsed Euclid's beauty laid bare, does he want to leave us only with chi and pi (π) r square?

[Dr.] PETER BARGLOW
Clinical Director, Psychiatric
and Psychosomatic Institute,
Michael Reese Hospital and
Medical Center
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Frederick Crews's article has so many misstatements, errors of fact, and inferences drawn from these errors that I am hard put to deal with all of them. Some examples:

1. Mr. Crews notes a falling number of applicants for analytic training and therapy and states this shows the disfavor psychoanalysis is in. Actually, the number of applicants for specialization in psychiatry is decreasing and thus the pool from which the analytic trainees are picked is smaller, although the percentage of psychiatric trainees choosing analytic training is constant. . . . The number of analysts trained by institutes affiliated with the American Psychoanalytic Association has never been higher and is growing steadily. . . .

2. The fact that the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* of the American Psychiatric Association has pronounced neurosis "devoid of meaning" is no fact at all. There has been an extensive and complex reworking of psychiatric nomenclature in order to make diagnostic entities more specific by including multiple etiologic factors so as eventually to correlate diagnoses with specific types of treatment planning. *All* psychiatric diagnoses have been changed and elaborated on. The neuroses are now to be found in various categories under slightly different names, as are most other diagnoses (such as the schizophrenias, organic brain syndromes, etc.).

3. "Decisive advances" in brain, sleep, and dream research and in many other areas that Mr. Crews mentions, and some that he does not, have certainly made us more knowledgeable about *brain* function, but not much more about *mind* function. (Some of this research has, in fact, been done by psychoanalysts and others conversant with analytic theory.) For instance, our considerable knowledge of the neurophysiological correlates of dreaming tells us nothing about the meaning of dream images and actions. I have seen no contrary claims in the literature. Similarly, the study of psychosis in terms of biochemistry and genetics has supplemented clinical knowledge. This has led, for example, to studies of children at risk for psychosis by virtue of genetic and presumably biochemical vulnerability. But the methods of intervention which attempt to pre-

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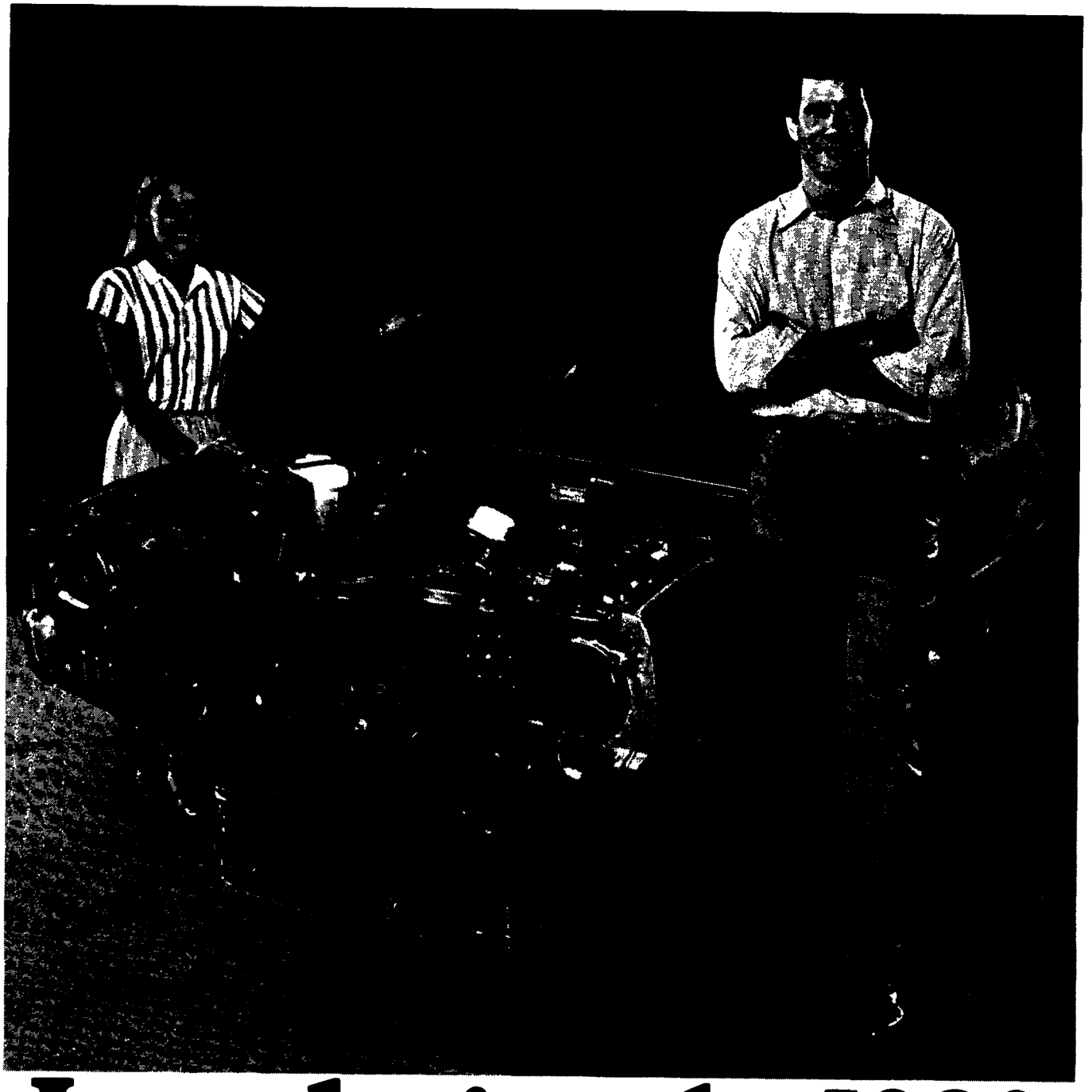

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vent the emergence of psychosis are based on psychoanalytic concepts.

4. One of the most telling failures of Mr. Crews is, I think, his lack of recognition of the extent to which psychoanalytic concepts . . . have been taken up by and incorporated into general psychiatric theory and practice. Most psychiatric and psychological practitioners use variants of psychoanalytic concepts. . . .

5. Finally, Mr. Crews seems consistently to contradict himself. He taxes psychoanalysis for its rigid adherence to Freud's original theories at the same time that he cites various theoretical advances and changes introduced by Freud and numerous other analysts following him as evidence of the inconsistency, incoherence, and ultimately non-scientific basis of psychoanalysis. Freud changed theory to correspond with new clinical data, a process still going on today. Doesn't all science do this? Hasn't Newtonian physics been updated and annotated and is it therefore worthless? Is the particle physics of today worthless and its originators fools and charlatans simply because it will inevitably be different tomorrow? . . .

[Dr.] MAXWELL H. SOLL
Dallas, Texas

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . It strikes me as curious that Frederick Crews, who has never treated a patient, should place so much emphasis on what he considers empirical evidence of the untruths of psychoanalysis. If, as seems evident, he is relying on the empirical observations of others, what is there in his experience that would enable him to write off as nonsensical the detailed and documented observations of people like Rene Spitz, Margaret Mahler, or the people around Anna Freud at the Hampstead Clinic?

"Ordinary empirical prudence," in Mr. Crews's own words, would dictate some skepticism of his own competence to evaluate the methodology and results of the direct observation of children by many trained observers which corroborate in essential detail psychoanalytic theories of sexual development (see, for example, Roiphe and Galenson, 1971). In this area, Mr. Crews states, ". . . 'evidence' supplied by indoctrinated adult patients may not necessarily be evidence of an infantile state of development. . . ." Yet nowhere does he mention evidence from child analysis or evidence from systematic non-analytic observation of children. Perhaps he is simply unfamiliar with this huge body of work.

The essence of Mr. Crews's criticism, as I understand him, is on a-priori epistemological grounds. Unfortunately, he is as weak here as he is in the clinical area, for his undiluted espousal of "empiricism" creates a dilemma. Would Mr. Crews like to prove, on purely empirical grounds, that he had a toothache? And if unable to do so, would he be willing to say that "toothache" was a nonsensical concept?

There are indeed valid criticisms to be made of psychiatric theory and practice, including psychoanalysis, but their cogency eludes Mr. Crews. Wittgenstein, fifty years ago, said it much better: "The confusion and barrenness of psychology is not be explained by calling it a 'young science': its state is not comparable with that of physics, for instance, in its beginnings. For in psychology there are experimental methods and conceptual confusion. The existence of the experimental method makes us think we have the means of solving the problems which trouble us; though problem and method pass one another by."

[Dr.] HAL J. BREEN
Phoenix, Arizona

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . If we applied empirical tests to all religions, we would all be nonbelievers. I deeply resent the notion that the value of Freudian analysis must conform to Frederick Crews's thesis that it has no value. If that were true, how could one explain Freud's impact on the world? . . .

At the age of sixty-two I took early Social Security to help pay for my analysis. I go once or twice a week to a Freudian psychiatrist. I will continue to go until I am dismissed. . . . I swallow nothing whole hog, but I do wish to express my gratitude for the insights, large and small, which I have received from my analysis. . . .

Mr. Crews says that Freudianism is "conceptually muddled and empirically dubious and does not merit our belief." Yet long after Mr. Crews fades away, Freud and variations on Freudian truths will survive.

RUTH KATHERINE O'BRIEN
Palm Beach, Florida

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Ironically, I had just finished reading Ronald W. Clark's *Freud* when I opened up the July issue of COMMENTARY and learned from Frederick Crews not only that Freud was dead, but that everything connected with him is terminal. At least Mr. Crews didn't assault Nietzsche—I might have been denied all of my gods in one short article.

Mr. Crews correctly questions the social usefulness of psychoanalysis. It certainly isn't a massive answer. (Hardly a new insight, however.) And it is clear that the stubborn uncompromising doctor from Vienna was only human, even if brilliantly so. (So what else is new?) But the author's attack on the psychotherapists and his charge that they have not responsibly developed their own medical discipline is too sweeping and condemning. Mr. Crews apparently wants to dump overboard some eight decades of professional development. . . .

WILLIAM M. TAYLOR
San Anselmo, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As a psychiatrist who is not a psychoanalyst, I was bemused by Frederick Crews's insistence that Freudians are not to be believed because they fail as scientists, while he uses phrases like "as everybody knows" and cites the politically motivated (by his own acknowledgment) *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* of the American Psychiatric Association as proofs of his thesis. And to say that Eysenck is "authoritative" on Freud is like saying Arafat is authoritative on Herzl.

Some things that are self-evident do not readily lend themselves to Koch's postulates or to controlled experimentation, e.g., that people are reluctant to face unpleasant truths (resistance); that we are sometimes driven by irrational forces within us (id); that there is conflict between generations (Oedipus complex); that we all want our needs gratified without delay (pleasure principle); that someone who had a bad day at the office might come home and kick the dog (displacement); that we admire, dread, and seek the approval of authority figures (transference).

None of the foregoing was created by Freud any more than Newton created gravity or Einstein created the speed of light. But Freud did make these concepts accessible

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to our understanding and therefore mastery.

For Mr. Crews to call those in a lengthy or even lifelong analysis "addicted" seems as gratuitously cruel as it would be to call a paraplegic "addicted" to his wheelchair.

Finally, I will refrain from "psychoanalyzing" Mr. Crews's motivations, for I agree with his concluding paragraph in which he cautions against using "bits and pieces of psychoanalytic thought for *ad hoc* explanatory purposes." It is a pity that that message was obscured by his sophistry.

[Dr.] HOWARD GOLDEN
Miami, Florida

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Frederick Crews presents a fascinatingly rich tapestry whose texture is laced with truths that are misleading. For example, his false conclusion that psychoanalysis cannot be a verifiable natural science (as contrasted with an experimental one) . . . ignores the fact that tape-recorded psychoanalyses are now available, under conditions that carefully protect the patient's privacy, for empirical study and consensual validation . . . of many psychoanalytic concepts.

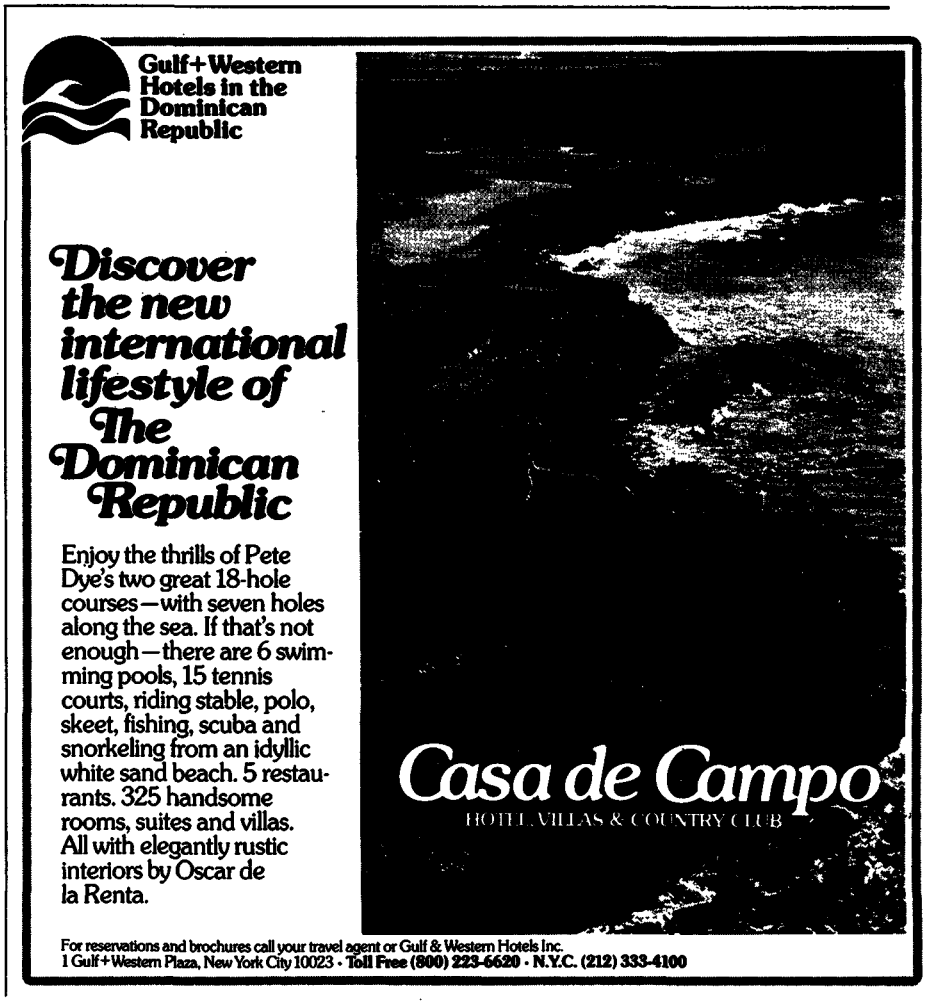
Since a letter to the editor does not permit a detailed response, perhaps a brief observation on a single oversimplification by Mr. Crews might be helpful. He writes: "The idea is that psychoanalysis alone roots out the source of the patient's suffering by giving him conscious access to his long-repressed traumatic experiences in the first years of life."

This is the common misconception which subscribes to the idea that the analyst's goal is still, as it was before 1930, to uncover the original historical "trauma," the "why" of a behavior, with the implication that this discovery is the curative act. It would be more correct to say that an analysis can be roughly divided into two phases. The therapeutic task of the first phase is to make the "here-and-now" experience between patient and analyst come alive with feeling in order to discover the ways in which the past is still active in the patient's current perceptions and behavior. . . .

A second misconception is that this regression to a transference neurosis induces an unnecessary, deleterious, dependency relationship. Actually, it is clearly understood by the analyst that the experiencing of the therapist as identical with the objects of the patient's memories is for the purpose of maintaining the transference as a child to a powerful parent. Next, and this is crucial, the analyst understands that the task of treatment in the second phase is to help the patient grasp the way in which the present is different from the past. This must include the patient's understanding of how he tries to experience contemporaries, especially the analyst, as behaving in particular ways. If he can do this, the patient's conviction of what his parents really were like, or more often, of the way in which the patient wished to see them, will be perpetuated. By preserving this mythology about his past, the patient can maintain his current behavior, using the past as justification for it.

A third misconception is that the analyst attempts the impossible task of preserving his relationship to the patient as that of a blank screen for the patient's projections. Not only does the analyst use his own reactions as a guide to the meaning of the material throughout the analysis, but his spontaneous reactions as a "real" person are particularly important in the terminal part of the second phase, to enhance the process of differentiating the present from the past.

For example, a female patient with no distortion of her reality-testing function comes into a session in the terminal part of the second phase and says, "I noticed you sent your secretary out as I was coming down the hall, to see how much better-looking I am now." In the initial phase of treatment, the analyst's task is to help the patient understand the way in which this is a transference reaction, recreating the feelings she had toward her father, a man who really was too inhibited to tell her directly when he was pleased at how well she was doing. In the terminal part of the second phase, the analyst might respond, "Why would I be that indirect?" This is a correct use of the analyst's characteristics as a real person *if* it facilitates the task of helping the patient become aware that she *wants* to continue seeing the analyst as she saw her father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(for only then can she continue to believe that he really did secretly prefer her to her mother). In that case, she would never have to face her former inadequacies as a child, her shame at still wanting the preferred position with a currently unavailable object, and her need to assume what for her are painful adult responsibilities.

[Dr.] WILLIAM C. OFFENKRANTZ
Director, Division of
Psychoanalysis
Medical College of Wisconsin
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Frederick Crews's article by no stretch of the imagination reflects any psychoanalytic scholarship. If he wished to point out constructively that psychoanalysis as therapy and theory has serious difficulties and requires much scientific investigation and validation, as a psychotherapist I would be the first to agree. Many psychoanalytic colleagues would also concur. However, to write such a tendentious, exaggerated, *murderous* article based on abysmal ignorance is unforgivable. . . .

Anyone who claims to know psychoanalysis with more than superficial interest would *never* have described the concept of "resistance" as Mr. Crews does:

> The resistance in question issues in a reluctance to accept the therapist's most assured guesses about the patient's psychodynamics and their relation to "remembered" or reconstructed infantile experiences. Thus, the patient's balking at interpretive hints that may be misguided or even silly is taken as a sign of resurgent conflict with parents and siblings. The dissolving of this allegedly atavistic uncooperativeness—a recalcitrance which may in fact attest to the patient's unsurrendered common sense—is considered to be the analyst's infinitely painstaking task. Uniquely among recipients of psychotherapy, then, the Freudian client has his treatment prolonged and pays handsomely for the privilege of having some of his objections set aside, even though they may have been entirely warranted.

Resistance has fundamentally little to do with what Mr. Crews describes. As a matter of fact, if he had read Freud's "Analysis Terminable and Interminable" carefully, he would have encountered the following: "The ego ceases to support our efforts at uncovering the id; it opposes them; disobeys the fundamental work of analysis, and allows no further derivatives of the repressed to emerge." Thus resistance is primarily an *unconscious* process within the ego related to the ego's defense mechanisms which interferes with the fundamental work of psychoanalysis. The resistance requires interpretation from the analyst because of its unconscious nature in order for the analysis to progress. Resistance, usually, has very little to do with conscious acceptance or denial of the analyst's interpretation. Resistance is a force in the patient against the analytic procedure, its process, and the analyst. It is ubiquitous and is present not only in every analysis but probably in every form of psychotherapy. Psychoanalysis is the only form of psychotherapy that systematically analyzes it, and in the process expands the patient's consciousness. . . .

Freud furthes states in "Analysis Terminable and Interminable": "If the analyst tries to explain one of [the patient's] distortions made by him for the purposes of defense, and to correct it, he finds him uncomprehending and inaccessible to sound arguments." The technical problem Freud refers to in this example is a special problem of "negative transference" which has special implications beyond the scope of this letter. Resistance assumes many forms and some of the consciously most "cooperative" and most "compliant" patients are unconsciously highly resistant.

As for Mr. Crews's reference to the patient's reluctance to accept the analyst's interpretation vis-à-vis infantile memories, Freud's next paper in the same volume, entitled "Constructions in Psychoanalysis," makes the following point: "Only the further course of the analysis enables us to decide whether our constructions are correct or unserviceable. We do not pretend that an individual construction is anything more than a conjecture which awaits examination, confirmation, or rejection. We claim no authority for it, we require no direct agreement from the patient, nor do we argue with him if at first he denies it."

Does this sound like Mr. Crews's statement about "the therapist's *most assured guesses* [my emphasis] about the patient's psychodynamics and their relation to 'remembered' or reconstructed infantile fantasies" (the same as Freud's "construction")? I would think not! Freud's statement is that of the cautious scientist-clinician formulating a hypothesis, whereas Mr. Crews has parodied him (and all other analysts) as an authoritarian tyrant whose patient resists the bonds of his interpretive pronouncements with common-sense objections which may be right but who then must suffer years of analysis because the analyst was wrong. . . .

Mr. Crews, I think, finally reveals a reason, other than stated, for attempting the critique. This seems related to his own disappointment in psychoanalysis, because he states: "I was myself such a Freudian for a decade or so—excited yet also made wary by the prospect of holding a master key to interpretation . . . *a head start toward certainty*" (my emphasis). No psychological theory or therapy can assure that kind of omniscience, and the disappointing frustration of that wish can lead to the kind of hostile, misleading article which Mr. Crews has written. . . .

[Dr.] ISAAC REBNER
Dallas, Texas

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Among the most predictable of events is that a missile will be fired from academe, charged with self-righteous indignation which only scientific rigor can fuel, and aimed at demolishing psychoanalytic theory. More eloquent than most, Frederick Crews has launched the most recent attack. And yet, what has Mr. Crews accomplished but to remind us of how extraordinarily intricate are the workings of the mind? Curiously, Mr. Crews mentions not a single psychoanalytic construct in his sweeping denunciation. Ostensibly, we are to purge the lot of them as we rid ourselves of the ambiguities, contradictions, empirically unsupported constructs, and invalid methods of psychoanalysis. Does this mean that Mr. Crews promises never to use a psychoanalytic construct in his efforts to understand human behavior? Will he never allow himself to think that the unconscious exists? Is the idea of infantile sexuality completely discredited? Does he promise never to invoke the concept of Oedipal strivings and conflicts? Is the notion of castration anxiety completely absurd? Is it absolutely wrong to observe instances of disguised or displaced erotic wishes in accounting for human behavior? Let us once and for all dis-

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miss ideas about repression, denial, and the other mechanisms of defense. Once we rid ourselves of these fantasies and unsubstantiated concepts, how then will we describe and explain human behavior? Which explanatory concepts will supplant psychoanalytic theory? All that his lament reveals is that Mr. Crews is bitterly impatient and disappointed with the impenetrability of the human spirit, but how have we come to see its labyrinthine complexity if not by means of psychoanalysis?

HERBERT ZIMILES
Bank Street College of Education
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Since Frederick Crews quotes extensively from our book, *The Scientific Credibility of Freud's Theories and Therapies,* in support of his extremely negative view of psychoanalysis, we would like to offer a comment. We wrote our book in an effort to add up all of the available scientific evidence concerning the validity of Freud's major theories. We found that he was right about some things and wrong about others. For example, his formulations about Oedipal dynamics, the oral and anal character structures, and the family pattern basic to male homosexuality do have fairly good scientific support. However, his dream theory, his concept that the feminine body image is inferior, and his ideas about vaginal versus clitoral orgasm are unsubstantiated. Freud's theories do not represent a monolithic unity. They consist of clusters of ideas and these clusters can, one by one, be scientifically tested. Crews's demands that we dismiss all of Freud's ideas as nonsense simply duplicate the rigid and unreasonable attitude he attributes to the psychoanalytic establishment. Orthodox psychoanalysts require that Freud's ideas be swallowed whole and Mr. Crews wants them to be completely regurgitated. The passion in Mr. Crews's presentation, with its use of words like "silly," "naive," "vacuous," and "crude," is exactly what a scientific appraisal should avoid. The unending dispute between pro- and anti-Freudians will never cease as long as extremists continue to shout at us in loud, unreasonable tones.

The time has come to move beyond the purely emotional debates taking place between members of

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the psychoanalytic establishment and critics, such as Mr. Crews. It is possible, as we have shown in our book, to evaluate Freud's ideas objectively and dispassionately on the basis of hundreds of carefully done studies. We would urge readers to review the presented evidence for themselves and draw their own conclusions. If they do, it is likely that they will be impressed, as we have been, by the many ideas that have received substantial empirical backing. However, they will also be able to see clearly that Freud, like the rest of us, was far from infallible.

SEYMOUR FISHER
ROGER P. GREENBERG
State University of New York
Upstate Medical Center
Syracuse, New York

FREDERICK CREWS writes:

These ten letters, nearly all of them written by people with something tangible to lose by the collapse of psychoanalysis, fail to address my argument squarely or even to characterize it with reasonable accuracy. For the record, I did not advocate applying empirical tests to religions (O'Brien), or declare that all observations made by Freudians are nonsensical (Breen, Fisher and Greenberg), or say that everything connected with Freud is terminal (Taylor), or assert that psychoanalytic theorists are charlatans (Soll), or advocate behavioral psychology as an alternative to psychoanalysis (Barglow). Nor did I deny that many Freudian patients improve (O'Brien) or that psychoanalysis has profoundly affected psychiatric theory and practice (Soll). These and other distortions facilitate the toppling of a straw man, while the essential logic of "Analysis Terminable" remains unrefuted—indeed, unmentioned.

Let me put that logic into one crowded paragraph. The ultimate survival of any nontranscendent discipline, I said, depends on cogent evidential, though not necessarily experimental, support for its claims—which is simply to say that the uninitiated must be shown plausible grounds for agreeing that those claims are preferable to others in the same domain. Psychoanalytic theory, which has enjoyed the blessing of established medicine and an enormous cultural vogue, purports to base itself on especially impressive therapeutic results and on confirmations of its general theory within the clinical setting. But no such differential therapeutic results have been remotely suggested by comparative studies, and the Freudian analytic hour is epistemologically compromised to such an extreme degree that no neutral observer could settle for the anecdotal proofs of psychoanalytic dogma that practitioners cull from it. Furthermore, the intellectual embroilment that Freudian innovators still maintain with an overweening and scientifically obstinate founder, combined with the tacit requirement of not undermining the rationale for a lengthy regimen of treatment, guarantees that theoretical reforms will not be sufficiently thoroughgoing. An outsider, therefore, has no rational basis on which to become a convert to psychoanalysis. In all likelihood, the eventual future of this movement will be the future of an illusion.

Instead of confronting this argument, several of these correspondents impugn my grasp of psychoanalytic theory, while others speculate about the personal oddity and "frustration" that must have prompted my outburst of aggression. Setting aside the gratuitous diagnoses, let me affirm that I understand Freudian principles at least as well as I did when, some fifteen years ago, colleagues of these writers welcomed me as a knowledgeable ally of their discipline. Of course one can always claim that a critic has missed nuances of Freudian theory; as I mentioned in my essay, the multiplicity of ways in which psychoanalysis is construed insures that any objection can be declared irrelevant. The only effective means of calling psychoanalysis to account is to put the shoe on the other foot—to ask how the doubts of nonbelievers can be rationally overcome. With few exceptions, however, Freudians can answer an empirical or logical challenge only by flashing their medical badges and by paraphrasing the textbooks taught at their institutes, as if the mere reiteration of questionable ideas constituted their justification to an increasingly doubting public.

In their pedagogical zeal, these writers have left substantially unchallenged a good many damaging assertions in "Analysis Terminable," including the following: that Freud's case histories are a record of acknowledged failure; that psychoanalysis cannot claim a demonstrated therapeutic superiority to a single other modality; that no basis exists for accepting Freud's avowal that "the repressed" is specifically pathogenic; that the evidence for Freudian clinical interpretations is tainted by the self-fulfilling effects of the analyst's suggestion, just as Freud feared it might be, and by excessively pliant rules of inference-drawing; that some analyses last for a decade and more at enormous expense and without significant progress; that the placebo effect appears to be the most likely factor accounting for the degree of success that Freudian treatment has been observed to attain; that higher-level Freudian metapsychology generates no straightforward behavioral predictions that could serve to test the adequacy of a given concept; and that analytic theorists, in the very act of proposing "modern" reforms, have perpetuated Freud's general epistemological and methodological errors.

In ignoring or only marginally alluding to such grave charges, most of these writers are playing ostrich—pretending unconcern over every alleged deficiency in the hope that their opponent will be considered a fanatic. The charges, however, originate not with me but with numerous inquirers who, over the previous two decades, have assembled a devastatingly plausible case against psychoanalysis. The only novelty I claim for "Analysis Terminable" is that it was written by an ex-Freudian who recalls what it is like to possess a system of thought that is at once "penetrating" and reductive, skeptical and credulous, full of seeming boldness but mired in ambiguities and unexamined articles of belief.

I TRUST that the more preposterous statements in these letters require no sustained refutation. What could I reply, for example, to a writer (Breen) who places a toothache on the same level of ontological dubiety as metapsychological constructs that investigators have found wanting in both logical and evidential respects, yet who uncritically accepts at second hand the findings of committed Freudians? Should I really pause over the clever suggestion (Soll) that, according to my logic, Newtonian physics must be "worthless" *because* it has been "updated and annotated"? What can I do but gasp when Dr. Golden claims that *I* am the one who is mistreating "lifelong" psychoanalytic patients, whom he obtusely likens to paraplegics? How can I take seriously

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the outlandish fabrication (Barglow) that "Grünbaum, Eysenck, and Crews" have attempted "to define what is absolute 'scientific' truth about the human being"? When Dr. Barglow further asserts that "the validity of psychoanalytic theory is not connected historically or epistemologically to psychoanalytic treatment," I can only remark that we have here a psychoanalyst who appears not to have read Freud! (Perhaps he could at least spend a few minutes with Ernest Jones's preface to the *Collected Papers*.) How enthusiastic should we be about Dr. Barglow's reference to "empirical verifications of analytic formulations" that "are being done presently" (any minute now?) by teams of Freudian loyalists? And when the same advocate of circumspect reasoning deduces that my warning against interpretive recourse to "instant 'depth'" condemns me to "learning about only the manifest surface phenomena of psychology," I cannot imagine that COMMENTARY readers will think that something incisive and formidable has just been said.

Similarly, it would be tedious to wrangle with some of these correspondents about their chosen technique of argumentation, namely, question-begging. Let me just mention some instances and go on to substantive matters:

• In my article, I challenged the genuineness of some therapeutically "recovered" memories, just as Freud himself was obliged to do. Dr. Offenkrantz answers by reciting what the officially designated purpose of those memories is.

• I wrote of some patient's commonly-noted dependency on their therapists. Dr. Offenkrantz assures me that psychoanalysis does not *try* to produce a lasting dependency.

• I stated that analysts regard their patients' most stubborn, possibly justified, interpretive quarrels as signs of unconscious resistance. Dr. Rebner thinks that an adequate reply consists of defining resistance and quoting Freud's view of the matter ("The ego ceases to support our efforts at uncovering the id. . . .").

• I doubted that analysts can be the sole verifiers of their own hunches about the sources of a patient's pathology. Dr. Barglow counters by listing the ingredients of those same chancy hunches.

• I denied that psychoanalysis has shown differentially impressive therapeutic results. Dr. Barglow, in rebuttal, avers that psychoanalysis is still prescribed (by psychoanalysts?) "for many specific mild and severe disorders," and he proposes, without the slightest independent evidence on his side, that "A method with an emphasis on prolonged, painstaking investigation must have a greater potential for creating permanent intra-psychic personality change. . . ."

• And one correspondent begs a question that wasn't even asked. Dr. Soll, after tolerantly alluding to "genetic and biochemical vulnerability" to psychosis, boasts that attempts "to prevent the emergence of psychosis are based on psychoanalytic concepts." Surely the good doctor is aware that, if psychosis prevention *had* been at issue, the point to be established would have been the superior efficacy of such attempts.

LET ME devote my remaining space to matters that do have the appearance, and in some cases the actuality, of being substantial:

1. Have I misunderstood resistance (Rebner)? It is Dr. Rebner who misunderstands me in thinking that I consider the "essence" of resistance to be a reluctance to accept the analyst's interpretations; all I said was that resistance is thought to *issue in* such reluctance. Dr. Rebner helpfully adds that a patient's compliance, too, can be taken as a sign of resistance. He thus inadvertently underscores my own point that the practical effect of invoking resistance is to prolong the analyst-patient relationship on a profoundly unequal basis.

Incidentally, Dr. Rebner proceeds to a drastically false account of Freud's paper, "Constructions in Psychoanalysis," whose thesis is that analysts can be confident of their interpretations even without the patient's confirming memories. Freud himself displayed such confidence by *demanding* that Dora, the "female homosexual," and numerous patients supposedly "seduced in childhood" accede to his etiological conclusions—even though he later had to admit that the seductions probably never occurred. Freud the "cautious scientist-clinician" (Rebner) did not realize that all the sources of convergent corroboration for an analyst's causal hypotheses are open to the same objection, namely, that they are insufficiently protected from the analyst's own suggestion.

2. Have I indulged in an *ad hominem* misrepresentation of Heinz Kohut (Barglow)? An *ad hominem* argument is one that diverts attention from substantive considerations to the supposedly bad or foolish character of an opponent. I discussed Kohut in pursuit of a germane question, namely, whether reform within the Freudian mainstream shows sufficient intellectual independence from Freud. It doesn't, and Kohut's publications are Exhibit A.

As for my alleged distortion of Kohut's stance on female sexuality, nothing of the sort occurred. I recognized that Kohut is uncomfortable with the idea of penis envy, which he nevertheless feels obliged to defend—even to the point of fantasizing that natural selection may have favored those archaic women who were most mortified by having been issued the second-best genital equipment. Such ludicrous sophistry on Freud's behalf is not, as Dr. Barglow would have it, merely an instance of "admiring a distinguished predecessor." It is rather the attempted resuscitation of a moribund authority on whose prestige, conceptual apparatus, and flawed method the apologist himself intends to draw.

The speculation I quoted about prehistoric penis envy came from the very article on female psychology that Dr. Barglow accuses me of having hidden from view. The same article reassures Kohut's suspicious co-Freudians that he has "no quarrel with many of the classic psychoanalytic views in this area" (*Search*, p. 783) and that, so far as he is concerned, narcissistic injury from penis envy "has an incidence of one hundred percent" (p. 786).

3. Is psychoanalysis a science (Soll, Barglow)? Drs. Soll and Barglow regard alterations of theory undertaken "to correspond with clinical data" as proof that psychoanalysis is scientific, and Dr. Barglow can tell a science by its "skeptical, realistic attitude and approach." Both writers are pointing to a scientific *intent* without, however, recognizing the exacting scientific demands of making uncontaminated and replicable observations, of specifying outcomes that would discredit a given hypothesis or concept, and of exhausting simpler possible explanations of one's data. Lacking any of these controls, psychoanalysis has been scarcely superior epistemologically to astrology—another exegetical discipline

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that can boast "coherence" and "comprehensiveness," but which insulates itself against disproof and shows a preference for remote and unvalidated causal factors.

The changed view of female psychology that Dr. Barglow cites as a sign of scientific progress has come about, not through previously unavailable evidence unearthed by authenticated Freudian research, but through an altered social climate in which it is no longer altogether safe to insist on "normal female masochism," the desire for babies as substitute penises, and similar notions that were endorsed as received truth by several generations of analysts. Has Dr. Barglow forgotten how the American Psychoanalytic Association de-couched Karen Horney for resisting that bizarre orthodoxy? Was that the conduct of scientists?

As for Dr. Barglow's definition of "scientific truth," in the present context it is yet another instance of question-begging. Suppose we grant that scientific truth is nothing other than the agreements prevailing within "a scientific community of trained observers." The question, of course, is whether psychoanalysts constitute such a community. Though they assuredly have earnest empirical pretensions (i.e., they are *not* "charlatans"), they are in fact the keepers of a mystery—a body of unproven interpretive lore that has been inherited, with modifications to suit the times, from an idolized hero-genius who professed to have singlehandedly unlocked the human heart.

The points of consensus within such a group have no more scientific force today than they did when Freud was urging his followers to believe in a universal death instinct, to think that all babies hate the world and that all boys anticipate castration by their fathers, to regard character as chiefly a precipitate of transformed "sexual excitations" (*Standard Edition*, VII, 238f.), to agree that, by a Lamarckian mechanism, we are still experiencing the guilt incurred by our most distant ancestors when they killed and dined on the primal father, and to locate the origin of weaving in the prehistoric braiding of female pubic hair (XXII, 132). Though contemporary analysts reject or tiptoe by most of those perverse ideas, they continue to accept other Freudian dicta for which no better warrants have been presented.

4. Mustn't we cling to psychoanalysis for want of an adequate substitute (Golden, Zimiles, Barglow, Taylor)? In contrast to Dr. Rebner, Dr. Golden contents himself with vague commonsense definitions of psychoanalytic notions—resistance, e.g., is just a reluctance to face unpleasant truths—and then asks how we could get along without concepts that embrace such wide experience. Other correspondents pose the same question; in rejecting psychoanalysis, wouldn't we be denying the mind's "labyrinthine complexity" (Zimiles)? That is the gun that analysts hold at the heads of laymen who are anxious not to be thought unsophisticated. But in reality it is only a popgun. For, as Ernest Nagel remarked in a groundbreaking essay that my critics should ponder, "the imaginative sweep of a set of ideas does not confer factual validity upon them" ("Methodological Issues in Psychoanalytic Theory," *Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method, and Philosophy*, Sidney Hook, ed., NYU Press, 1959, p. 55). If the mind is indeed a labyrinth, the best means of finding one's way through it is not necessarily to confront it with another labyrinth.

Although we do need an adequately complex psychology, the first step toward acquiring one would be to look beyond the labored paradigm of psychoanalysis —with its quasi-biological forces, its reified and anthropomorphic mental agencies, its airy chains of cause and effect, and its fables about the crystallization of sexual identity—and to inquire how much or little we *actually* know about psychic conflict. To cherish an obfuscating and overreaching doctrine because no comparably grandiose body of propositions lies at hand is the height of intellectual timidity —or, in some cases, of vested convenience.

5. Have certain psychoanalytic ideas been validated after all (Breen, Barglow, Offenkrantz, Fisher and Greenberg)? Apart from Fisher and Greenberg's own work, all the corroborations cited in these letters suffer from epistemological liabilities that I have already discussed. To say, as Dr. Breen does, that "child analysis" offers evidence that Freud was right about childhood is to show total incomprehension of the point at issue. The same writer does refer to corroborations by direct observation of children, but he cannot bring himself to name a single corroborated hypothesis.

Let me focus now on Seymour Fisher and Roger P. Greenberg, for these writers have an understanding of empirical issues far superior to the one prevailing in the psychoanalytic community at large. They have produced what I regard as the most illuminating—and also the most sobering—book ever written from a pro-Freudian point of view. Despite their avowed prior sympathy for "a dynamic [i.e., psychoanalytic] understanding of the causes of a patient's difficulties and a therapy based on that understanding" (*Credibility*, p. 274), Messrs. Fisher and Greenberg recognize that nothing in the Freudian tradition can be taken on faith. Nor do they share Dr. Soll's trust in classical Freudian dream interpretation, or Dr. Barglow's and Dr. Offenkrantz's evident belief that the mere taping of psychoanalytic sessions endows them with scientific rigor. And they freely grant what Dr. Rebner refuses to see, that Freud often bullied his patients into "overcoming their resistance" to interpretations that later turned out to be wrong.

These co-authors show that Freud's case histories weigh *against* his therapeutic claims; that "clinical evidence" is totally unavailing for the validation of any psychoanalytic construct; that Freudian therapy, even when no allowance is made for its longer duration, more selective criteria for accepting patients, and higher dropout rate, has failed to show better results than *any* of its two hundred-plus competitors; that experiments have cast doubt on some psychoanalytic ideas; and that some others are, on their face, too cloudy or improbable to merit consideration in a principled study. If my other critics would read *The Scientific Credibility of Freud's Theories and Therapies* with care, they would find much reluctantly stated backing for my own argument.

But why then do Messrs. Fisher and Greenberg characterize me as an extremist? The objection cannot be my mere use of adjectives such as "crude" and "vacuous," for such language may be entirely appropriate to a given "scientific appraisal." Nor can it be my "demands that we dismiss all of Freud's ideas as nonsense," for I made no such demands. What I did say is that although psychoanalysis in general does not merit our cre-

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dence, some Freudian ideas "may eventually prove to have some merit," provided they can win a test against "concepts that take less for granted and fit better with inductive sense." If that is an extremist position, then the entirety of modern science is extremist.

The source of trouble, I gather, is my negative prognosis for the psychoanalytic movement. As critical sympathizers with that movement, Messrs. Fisher and Greenberg still *hope* (p. 337) that some evidence favoring its therapy may yet turn up, and they prefer to think that miscellaneous "supported" psychoanalytic notions establish the respectability of Freudian thought. In reply, I submit, first, that the co-authors' own assessment of comparative studies makes their hope for the therapy look utopian; second, that the suspect manner in which psychoanalytic theory sprang up and evolved reduces the credibility of its untested portions; third, that even a crackpot theory will look "confirmed" in cerain respects if it is sufficiently vague, ambitious, and laced with cynicism about human folly; and fourth and most important, that the specific validations claimed by Messrs. Fisher and Greenberg rely on an insufficiently critical use of the hypothetico-deductive method of theory testing.

This last point may appear inconsistent after my praise for the *negative* findings of these co-authors. But there is no contradiction. Messrs. Fisher and Greenberg, in exercising higher empirical standards than earlier pro-Freudian evaluators of research such as Paul Kline, have discredited a great number of seemingly corroborative studies. Yet their criteria for *accepting* positive findings are radically faulty, for Messrs. Fisher and Greenberg abandon their skepticism *as soon as a given Freudian hypothesis is well matched by a predicted consequence.* The flaw here—one that virtually nobody within the psychoanalytic movement appears able to grasp—is that some other extant hypothesis may do an even better job of accounting for the same consequence. In the words of Eysenck and Wilson (not, *pace* Dr. Golden, "Eysenck on Freud"):

> Most workers in the field seem to believe that having made a deduction from Freudian theory, and carried out a study which more or less gives results in partial agreement with prediction, this is the end of the story. They fail to consider the duty incumbent upon any scientist to consider alternative hypotheses which might equally well, or better, explain the results found (*The Experimental Study of Freudian Theories*, Methuen, 1973, pp. 386f).

It is regrettable that even the most scrupulous of Freudian sympathizers have marred their work by neglecting this key requirement. If Messrs. Fisher and Greenberg had kept in mind the necessity of weighing alternative explanatory hypotheses, they would probably have been compelled to endorse Eysenck and Wilson's carefully reasoned conclusion that "There is not one study which one could point to with confidence and say: 'Here is definitive support of this or that Freudian notion. . .'" (p. 392).

Finally, since my motives for writing a "cruel" and even "murderous" essay have been questioned, let me point out that psychoanalysts—who, judging from these letters, have been recovering nicely—are not the only parties involved. As a teacher, I am concerned to spare students and others the intellectual befuddlement that I myself endured in my Freudian period. As a member of a society steeped in Freudian platitudes, I would like people to know that the guilt dispensed by psychoanalytic theorists to striving women and to the parents of homosexuals, "neurotics," and psychotics can be plausibly declined. And then of course there are the Freudian patients and prospective patients, many of whom have remained unaware of therapeutic alternatives to plunging their savings into the protracted and dubiously relevant task of stirring up ancient grievances. If "Analysis Terminable," my first published statement about psychoanalysis since 1975 and the only one that deals with therapy, is of use to some of these people, I will be able to endure the charge of having administered cruel and unusual punishment to Freud's complacent heirs.

Soviet Strategy

To the Editor of Commentary:

In his article, "Soviet Global Strategy" [April], Richard Pipes argues: "Russia's growing nuclear arsenal inculcates in influential Western circles a sense of all-pervasive fear which induces a spirit of accommodation. Once the view gains hold that there is no defense

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against nuclear weapons, it becomes not unreasonable to advocate avoidance of disagreement with another nuclear power as the highest goal of foreign policy."

Mr. Pipes must have been hard up indeed to find support for this proposition. The only evidence he offers is a quotation from an article I wrote with Victor C. Johnson, in the Spring 1979 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, which he characterized as "quite typical of this body of opinion." The quotation was as follows (Mr. Pipes duly noted that the emphasis was added by him):

> *Above all*, we must remember that the Soviet Union remains the world's only other superpower—the only country in the world capable of destroying us. Maintaining good relations with the Soviet Union must be our *paramount* objective.

Mr. Pipes went on to say that I was "in effect urging that we subordinate all our national interests as well as our ideals of freedom and human rights, and whatever else many of us regard as 'paramount,' to another criterion, namely, survival; and that in line with this criterion, we should seek accommodation with that country which can deny it to us."

For shame, Mr. Pipes! As a Yale man, I expect better scholarship from a professor at our sister institution. I can only assume that an inexperienced research associate found the quote, gave it to you on a 3 x 5 card, and that you rose for it like an incautious trout going after a fly.

First of all, the article in which the quoted passage appeared had nothing to do with nuclear strategy; its subject, and title, was "A Rational Approach to Export Controls." Odd that your seemingly careful footnote omitted this.

Second, the sentences appeared in a paragraph dealing with the question of our trade policy with *China*. In that paragraph Mr. Johnson and I argued that "a policy of using export controls for the explicit purpose of building up China at the expense of the Soviet Union would be dangerous," and that, while the objective of maintaining good relations with the Soviet Union should not deter us from normalizing our relations with China, it would be foolish to "increase Soviet apprehensions" or "deliberately to insult the Soviets."

Finally, a little effort on Mr. Pipes's part would have disclosed, from the pages of the *Congressional Record*, that I have for years been a vocal critic of the Soviets' human-rights record and a supporter of policies such as that embodied in the Jackson-Vanik amendment designed to bring about improvements, that as long ago as 1972 I protested against the Olympics being awarded to Moscow, and that I supported all of the Carter administrations's tough actions in response to the outrageous Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

By this I do not mean to imply that I am in agreement with Mr. Pipes's hyperbolic analysis of Soviet global strategy or his prescriptions for the appropriate U.S. response. I am not. But to debate the various issues would require another article. In this letter, let me make just one final point: Mr. Pipes correctly notes in passing that Soviet expansionism "has solid roots in Russian history." But he devotes far more attention to his thesis that Soviet global strategy is a necessary expression of the "international doctrine" of Marxism-Leninism. Significantly, Mr. Pipes does not attempt to explain why other Marxist-Leninist countries behave so differently. For example, he never mentions Yugoslavia and refers only in passing to China, not as a Marxist-Leninist power, but as an object of Russian concern.

[Congressman] Jonathan B. Bingham
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

RICHARD PIPES writes:

I do not know how Yale teaches its students to analyze texts, but it seems to me that we at Harvard demand greater rigor than Jonathan B. Bingham reveals. Whether Mr. Bingham made his imprudent remarks on Soviet nuclear weapons and U.S. foreign policy in a paper on our trade relations with China, or in an electoral address to his Bronx constituency, or at a lecture to a Georgetown garden club, is a matter of no consequence whatever. The only thing that matters is what it is that he has said and what his words signify. Since Mr. Bingham cannot disown his citation, and apparently finds it impossible to challenge my view of its implications, he prefers to have recourse to a distraction. I was taught in my first year on my college debating team never to let myself be lured into this kind of trap. Elementary, Mr. Bingham!

(Incidentally, although this matter too is irrelevant, just for the record let me state that the disputed citation was not supplied to me by "an inexperienced research assistant." I chanced upon it in a newspaper article and, wishing to make certain that Mr. Bingham had indeed expressed such irresponsible sentiments, I wrote him, asking for the source. In his response, he directed me to his *Foreign Affairs* article.)

I applaud Mr. Bingham's criticism of Soviet violations of human rights as well as his support of the Jackson-Vanik amendment, the Olympic boycott, and what, on a generous impulse, he calls "tough actions" of President Carter in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. But none of these commendable expressions of political realism repairs the mischief contained in his recommendation of what U.S. policy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union ought, in principle, to be. They merely demonstrate that he is inconsistent. For how can he advocate that we "not increase Soviet apprehensions" or "deliberately insult the Soviets" when every one of the policies which he claims to support causes Moscow apprehension and is perceived by it as a deliberate insult? How can he insist that we make maintenance of "good relations with the Soviet Union . . . our paramount objective" when he himself admits to values higher than good relations with the Soviet Union?

My quarrel, of course, is not with Mr. Bingham but with the kind of confusion and inconsistency about U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union that characterizes American liberal opinion and is reflected in his statement. In my article, I expressed doubts "whether Congressman Bingham has thought out the implications of his words." His response makes it clear that he has not, and this is rather to his credit.

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The Liberal and Abortion

The liberal concept that the state itself must care for the poor was indeed a radical view at the beginning of this century.

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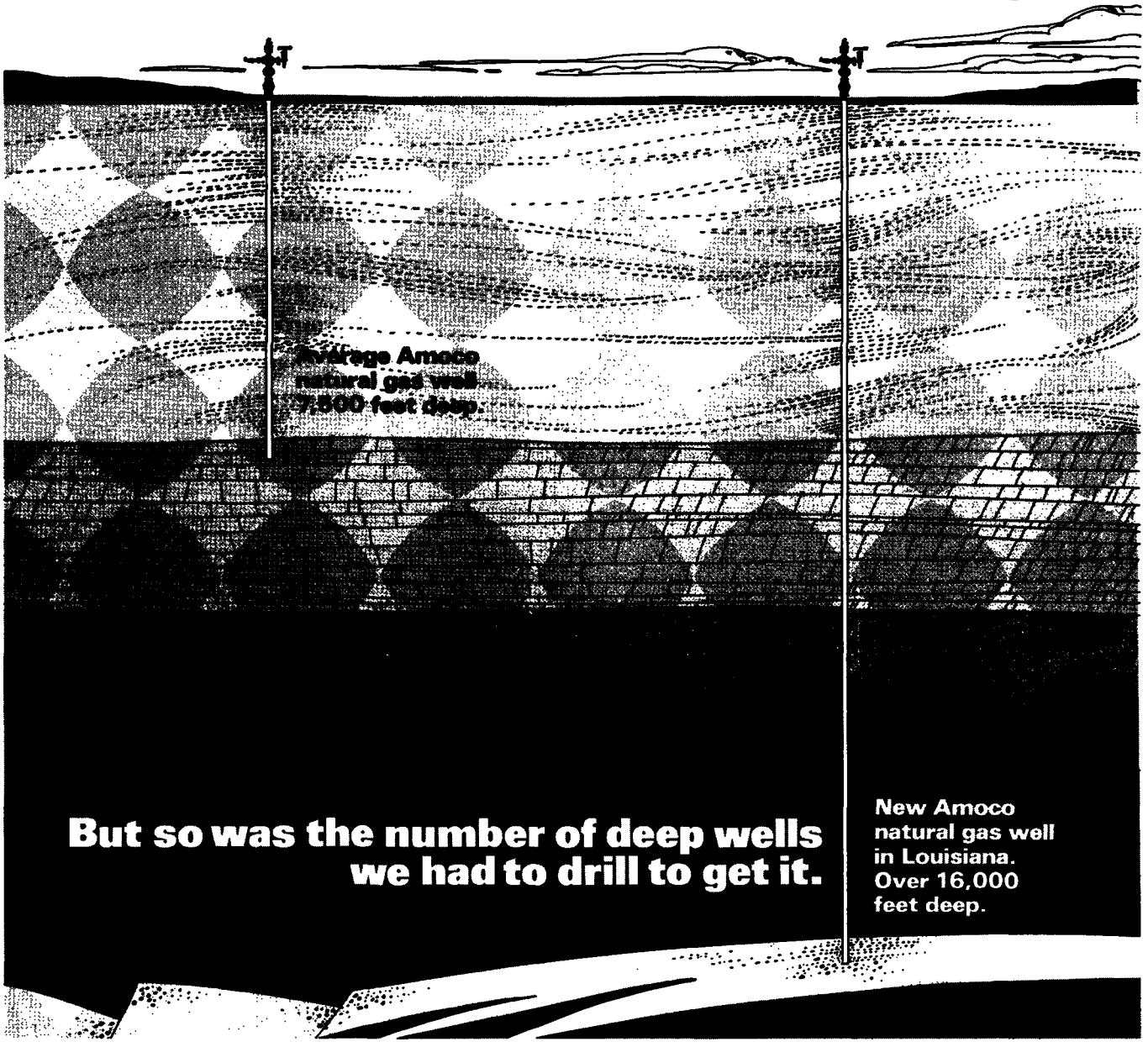

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Reagan and the Republican Revival

James Q. Wilson

FOR PERHAPS the first time since Theodore Roosevelt, the Republican party has become the party of change. During the 1920's, it was the party of "normalcy" and "business"; during the 1930's and 1940's, it was the party of resistance alternating with periods of reluctant "me-too-ism"; and in the 1950's, it was the party of national unity under a military hero. In the 1960's, it began to put together a challenge to Democratic orthodoxy more fundamental and far-reaching than either resistance, reluctance, or heroism, but the challenge was poorly developed, linked to the fortunes of a half-hearted and impolitic candidate, and widely regarded as expressing the deviant sentiments of an unimportant minority. In 1980, it has acquired a skillful spokesman, a vast (though quarrelsome) organizational network, the leading position in the public-opinion polls, and—most importantly—an alternative vision of what American government and American society ought to be like.

By contrast, the Democratic party resembles nothing so much as the old Republican party in the era of Robert Taft and Thomas E. Dewey, with one enervating difference—the Democrats have been in power, with brief exceptions, for nearly half a century. Thus, the Democrats are simultaneously bereft of new ideas and forced to take responsibility for old ones. Senator Kennedy mounted a Taft-like challenge to the rival faction in his party, demanding fidelity to the old orthodoxy despite the unpopularity of the social part of that orthodoxy (busing, gun control) and the lack of any credible evidence that the economic and welfare parts (rationing, government health care) would work. President Carter dissented from what he considers the rash or unfeasible aspects of the Kennedy platform but was left defending a continuance of past policies that have lost their appeal.

The Eastern mind instinctively rebels at the thought that the party of Ronald Reagan could represent anything but blind reaction set out in an actor's clever one-liners fraught with factual inaccuracies. Though Democratic politicians speak solemnly of "not underestimating Ronald Reagan," in truth they underestimate him greatly—they do not take him seriously as a presidential candidate and they do not yet believe that he represents anything more than an alienated collection of single-issue groups whose leaders have (temporarily) taken advantage of popular dissatisfaction with the Carter Presidency. The evidence for this was the belief among many of them that if only the party could find a way to nominate an Edmund Muskie or a Walter Mondale or a Henry Jackson, the Reagan threat would shrivel. Now, it is possible that a different Democratic candidate could defeat Reagan, but it would hardly be a sure thing. Recall: since 1944, no Democratic candidate save Lyndon Johnson in 1964 has been able to win the Presidency without carrying the South, and it is far from clear that any Democrat (with the possible exception of Carter) could do well against Reagan in that region.

This is not the first time some people have erroneously thought of Reagan as a weak candidate, nor are Eastern Americans the only group to have made this mistake. In 1966, the national press was dumbfounded when Ronald Reagan beat Pat Brown for governor of California by nearly a million votes just four years after Brown had trounced Richard Nixon (a "serious" candidate) by nearly a third of a million votes. Today, the European press, to judge by summaries I have seen from West Germany and England, is preoccupied with the claimed (and possibly real) personal weakness of Reagan: his lack of experience in foreign affairs, his "shallowness," his age.

I have never met Ronald Reagan; for all I know, these concerns about experience, character, and even age may be important. But for electoral purposes, they miss the point. And that point is this: the Reagan candidacy is a candidacy based on *issues*, issues which the candidate has developed over the better part of two decades and which now, taken as a whole, command the assent of a very large proportion of the American people (whether a majority, remains to be seen). Issues have often been more important in national elections than some political scientists have been will-

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ing to admit, but in this election, as in the elections of 1964, 1968, 1972, and 1976, they will play an especially important role. It was their failure to understand this (among other things) that may account for the poor showing in the Republican primaries of George Bush, Howard Baker, and John Connally, though in fairness to them Reagan would probably have been nominated regardless of what they did. He, after all, had been developing his issue constituency for a long time; they either never developed one or started only a few months before the ballots were cast.

SHORTLY after Reagan was elected governor of California, I wrote for this magazine an article attempting to explain to my uncomprehending Eastern friends what had happened ("A Guide to Reagan Country: The Political Culture of Southern California," COMMENTARY, May 1967). Reagan was not, I argued then, a product of Hollywood eccentricities, suburban hot tubs, cultist religions, or the ideological quirks of "Lotusland." He was, rather, an expression of a regional political culture that was concerned, not with ideology but with property, not with eccentricity but with propriety, not with some romantic version of the past but with a desire for a future in which rewards would be allocated on the basis of effort, decency, and competence. Southern Californians, or at least the majority of them who supported Reagan, thought that right living based on traditional values would produce a good society and were in rebellion against what they took to be the efforts of some to acquire benefits without effort or to debase society by wrong living.

The people who felt this way had little or nothing in common with Hollywood; they were persons of Midwestern Protestant stock, vaguely populist in their outlook (they distrusted political parties and large institutions), who looked upon government as having the role of facilitator rather than conserver. That is, government was to supply those minimal services, and insure the availability of opportunities, which would permit individuals to work for their own benefit. Getting "something for nothing" was anathema, the hallmark of Eastern class politics and epitomized in "deals," privileges, and welfare dependency.

These views were not necessarily "conservative" in any traditional sense. Big business was no more popular as an institution in California than in Massachusetts and there was little desire to turn the clock back to 1931. The persons who gave voice to this political culture were, after all, the sons and daughters of the New Deal, with parents who had, in many cases, come to California to escape the agricultural depression of the Dust Bowl.

In 1967, when Governor Reagan took office, the issues that symbolized the concerns of Southern Californians were "welfare chiselers" and high taxes. The events of the late 1960's, combined with the rise to prominence of what everyone now calls, for lack of a better term, the New Class, added substantially to the list of grievances and enlarged the ranks of those who nursed them. Since I do not wish to enter the rather murky debate over what, if anything, the New Class represents, let me be more precise: Reaganism stands in opposition to those who believe in the unrestrained right of personal self-expression and the need for government to rationalize all other aspects of human affairs by rule and procedure. Reaganism opposes those who would legalize marijuana, abortions, and pornography and tolerate or encourage draft resistance, all in the name of personal freedom, and who would support court-ordered school busing, bans on gun ownership, affirmative action, and racial quotas, all in the name of rationalizing and perfecting society. Indeed, Reaganism is based on a profound conviction that the opposite policies are more nearly correct: if communal constraints on individual self-expression are sustained, then people will grow up to do the right thing with respect to blacks and the use of guns. Reagan's acceptance speech at the Republican national convention described his cause as one based on a "community of values embodied in these words: family, work, neighborhood, peace, and freedom." Family, work, and neighborhood came first.

In my 1967 article, I tried to summarize the discontents of those who voted for Governor Reagan this way: "The very virtues they have and practice are, in their eyes, conspicuously absent from society as a whole." The people who hold these views are neither rootless nor yearning for small-town simplicities; they are established parts of cosmopolitan metropolitan areas. They are simply angry.

NO POLITICAL movement as large as the one led by Ronald Reagan is likely to be homogeneous or single-minded. Indeed, there are more discrete factions, organizations, and causes vying for power and position within the Reagan movement than one finds in the Democratic party. That in itself is remarkable, indicative of the extent to which the forces demanding change have begun to coalesce in the Republican party. Anyone writing of Democratic or leftist politics in the past would have dwelt at length on the problem of building a viable coalition out of Southern segregationists, union leaders, big-city bosses, Marxist splinter groups, intellectuals, and single-issue movements as various as Share the Wealth, End Poverty in California, and America First. The Democratic party is not only the party of the intellectuals, it has also been, for most of its recent history, the intellectually interesting party.

Now attention has turned to the party headed by Governor Reagan, wherein we find, in loose

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and uneasy alliance, the Right-to-Life movement, the Young Americans for Freedom, the anti-ERA movement, Anita Bryant, intellectual libertarians, the entrepreneurs of direct-mail fund-raising, retired military officers, evangelical ministers, corporate executives, and opponents of the Panama Canal treaty. A recent book, *Thunder on the Right,** by a self-described conservative, Alan Crawford, devotes over three-hundred pages to deploring the "New Right," as he calls many of the groups that are, unofficially if not officially, part of the Reagan coalition. He criticizes them for various things, especially the rigidity of their views and their demand for political purity, but most of all for being "populistic"—that is, for distrusting institutions and favoring direct democracy in the form of plebiscites and referenda (such as Proposition 13 in California and anti-gay-rights measures in various communities).

Now, I have a good deal of sympathy for those, such as Crawford, who would like to retain the checks and balances and indirect democracy that the Founders had in mind when they wrote the Constitution. And I am attracted to his vision of what a "real conservative" is like: a person of measured prudence and elegant language, much given to reading history and recitations from Tocqueville, who values continuity, stability, and the preservation of ancient institutions. This rather genteel conservatism is enchanting but, alas, from the point of view of the fundamental forces at work in American politics today, it is (as usual) largely irrelevant.

Fundamental political change has not, since the Philadelphia convention of 1787, been the result of deliberation or moderation, but rather of the accumulation of elemental passions that seek to redefine the principles of a good society and that arise out of widely shared dissatisfactions rather than carefully tempered reflections. It is just such passions that are at work in America today. But when Crawford and other writers try to come to grips with them, the best they can do is sneer. Crawford does not take up the arguments of the Right-to-Life movement, or the anti-ERA movement, or the anti-gun-control lobby; he merely hurls epithets at them. They are simply "right-wingers" who try to emulate John Wayne and display their "macho" (he uses that word three times in three pages). And, as with most persons who are politically distant from some portentous forces, he sees them as more united than they are (in one section of the book he speaks of "interlocking directorates" that "coordinate" the various "home and family" groups, the leaders of which "meet continually" in order to build the "organizational structure" that can "take control of the culture").

I confess to finding some of the arguments and activities of the New Right a bit unnerving and I disagree with many of its views. But to write of these movements as if they were entirely composed of dangerous eccentrics is to miss the point. The revolutionary movement of the 1770's, the anti-slavery movement of the 1830's, the trade-union movement of the 1880's, the progressive movement of the 1900's, and the feminist movement of the 1910's all had elements that would not bear close scrutiny today. Zealotry is the cutting edge of change; one of the reasons that conservatives so often oppose change, I suppose, is that they so often find zealots such unappealing persons. But to dismiss the movement by disparaging the more vocal elements (the "macho" Sam Adams, the "shrill" Susan B. Anthony, the "absolutist" Oswald Garrison) is to turn one's back on history.

A MORE interesting line of inquiry would be to explore the tensions (not the "interlocking directorates") within the Reagan movement. If he becomes President, he will have to choose among the very different instincts of a deeply divided coalition. The libertarians drawn from such places as the Hoover Institution are not simply in favor of limited government, a sounder currency, and deregulated industry, they are also in favor of personal freedom carried at least as far as John Stuart Mill proposed: complete liberty for individual tastes and pursuits so long as the individual directly harms no other person. At a minimum, this means the legalization of marijuana and the sale of heroin (at least for adults), the ending of many (though not all) environmental controls, opposition to military conscription, the tolerance of deviant sexual practices, and significantly relaxed barriers on immigration into the country. How this will be viewed by Moral Majority, Inc., or Senator Jesse Helms, is not hard to imagine.

The corporate executives supporting Reagan hope for stern measures to stem inflation, tax cuts to spur investment, and a sounder currency, but many of them also want to expand their exports to all parts of the world, including the Soviet Union. Military officers certainly have no objection to an expanding economy but many wonder whether as part of this our corporations should sell to the Soviets the wherewithal to close the technological and production gap. And corporate executives themselves are divided over the merits of a tax cut; many reject the claims of Arthur Laffer, Jack Kemp, and others that reduced taxes will stimulate investment and production quickly or surely enough to prevent a steep rise in demand-pull inflation. They would prefer a balanced budget even at the cost of continued high tax levels. And though military officers find Reagan's stance on defense issues most congenial, many of them must wonder about his outspoken opposition to a draft (and even to the recently inaugurated registration program).

* Pantheon, 318 pp., $13.95.

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Perhaps, as the campaign unfolds, we shall obtain some clues as to where Reagan will move on these issues. But since it is a campaign, and since Reagan is a consummate campaigner, it is more likely that he will blur these conflicts in his own camp in order to widen his constituency. Yet there are limits to how far he can go in this direction, because his constituency is not simply a collection of disparate interests—every candidacy faces that problem—but rather an authentic social movement around which particular interests have coalesced. The life and heart of the campaign are not to be found in elite concerns with economic and foreign policy, but in mass concerns with social and moral issues. Richard Viguerie, the direct-mail fund-raiser for conservative causes, said in an interview with the New York *Times* that it was only when the Old Right, interested in foreign and economic affairs, "began to reach out and strike an alliance with social conservatives" that the "whole movement began to come alive." And a movement it is.

ONE MUST, I think, go back to 1896 to find an election quite like this. Then, William Jennings Bryan captured the Democratic party with much the same appeal, though not the same organizational skill, that Ronald Reagan brought to the Republican party. For a long time, the conventional view of Bryan's candidacy was that fostered by certain progressive historians: given to economic explanations of human affairs, they believed that Bryan simply represented the farmers' demand for cheap money against the gold standard defended by the Eastern bankers. The difficulty with this theory was not only that it failed to explain why some distressed farmers supported William McKinley and why so many poor urban workers supported the bankers; it was also based on the implausible assumption that money alone could imbue voters with the passion, the zeal, the downright frenzy that not only surrounded Bryan in 1896 but that lasted long enough to make him the Democratic nominee on two more occasions.

More recent research has shown that Bryan's appeal was as much cultural and moral as economic and political. Fundamentalist Protestants were outraged over the moral decay of urban life, the product, they supposed, of whiskey-swilling immigrants who had flooded into the tenements. Bryan called not simply for a new economic order, but for the purification of society. His appeal was as much to persons favoring temperance, blue laws, and the purging of corruption from the political parties as it was to those seeking the free coinage of silver, easy credit, and the public control of monopoly enterprises. As Richard Jensen has written in *The Winning of the Midwest*, Bryan's campaign was directed at small-town America where the voters were not only suffering farmers but also pietistic Protestants who "abhorred corruption, harbored millennial dreams, and preferred moralistic crusades to pluralistic cooperation." The pietistic view of America was not undemocratic; rather, it understood democracy in different terms from those favored by the urban political machines or the business corporations. To the pietists, democracy and social equality presupposed the acceptance of Christian morality and individual rectitude. Without these religious restraints on behavior, freedom would degenerate into license.

Bryan, of course, lost. But Reagan need not be dismayed by the comparison. With today's distribution of electoral votes, Reagan would win if he merely carried the regions Bryan carried in 1896 (chiefly, the South and the Plains) and added California, Indiana, Iowa, and West Virginia, four states that Bryan failed to carry by a combined total of fewer than 100,000 votes.

The 1896 election produced a major realignment of the political parties, one that endured until the New Deal coalition created by Alfred E. Smith and Franklin D. Roosevelt a third of a century later. That realignment reflected both a cultural as well as an economic cleavage among the electorate. Indeed, so deep and lasting were the party loyalties that were fixed in 1896 that entire regions came under the unchallenged control of one or the other of the two major parties, leading dissident factions within those parties to demand the direct primary so that voters would have a choice within the confines of one-party rule. It was, of course, the extension of the direct-primary system (and its surrogate, the caucus system) that later enabled George McGovern in the Democratic party and Ronald Reagan in the Republican to set in motion forces that may conceivably lead to another realignment.

Political scientists have devoted great attention to political realignments in American history but have not taken fully into account the extent to which these seismic shifts in partisan loyalties were accompanied by, and perhaps stimulated by, the shockwaves of religious and quasi-religious revivals. William G. McLoughlin of Brown University has written a luminous essay on the impact of the several "Great Awakenings" on American cultural and political history.* Awakenings are "periods of cultural revitalization that begin in a general crisis of beliefs and values and extend over a generation or so, during which time a profound reorientation in beliefs and values takes place." Awakenings have typically begun with religious revival movements.

The First Great Awakening from roughly 1730 to 1760 preceded and laid the groundwork for the American Revolution; the Second Great Awaken-

* In *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform*, University of Chicago Press (1978).

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ing (1800-1830) romanticized the common man and argued for the perfectibility of human nature, thereby supplying a moral element to the claims of Jacksonian Democracy and the motive energy for the anti-slavery movement. The Third Great Awakening (1890-1920) was a response to industrialization and the social violence and economic conflict of the end of the 19th century; it was fought out in the struggle between evangelical fundamentalism, led by Bryan and later by Billy Sunday, and the Social Gospel of Walter Rauschenbusch and the Protestant Progressives. Its legacy was to be found both in the camp grounds and revival tents of the preachers and the social reform organizations and civic associations of the Social Gospel. Politically, the latter legacy was by far the more lasting; after Bryan's campaign speeches and Sunday's sermons were half-forgotten echoes, the liberal Protestant reformers were in command of a vast network of institutions dedicated to finding scientific principles by which to moralize and rationalize society. The American Economic Association, now little more than a fraternity of persons arguing over regression equations, was founded by ministers and others as a reform movement with a quasi-religious mission; its draft statement of purposes, written by Richard T. Ely, described the state as "an educational and ethical agency" and the doctrine of laissez-faire as "unsafe in politics and unsound in morals."

These awakenings occurred at times when the prevailing set of moral understandings seemed inadequate to shape human behavior or make legitimate existing institutions. Traditional patterns of family life were challenged by new opportunities available to young persons; customary standards of communal life were flouted by rising levels of urban violence and public disorder. A "value dislocation" occurred—an acute sense of personal stress that made persons receptive to new religious appeals which, to be sufficiently responsive to the shared sense of lost direction, could not confine themselves to calls for individual salvation but had to address the social and political circumstances that created this stress. It was when a religious revival became a generalized and powerfully felt cultural critique that we can say an awakening was under way. These awakenings did not, of course, have a single theme; often, traditional and nativist preachers vied with progressive reformers for moral leadership. But one consequence seems clear: the major political realignments of the Jacksonian era and of the 1890's were shaped in part —perhaps in very large part—by the religious and cultural upheavals that preceded them.

WE DO NOT yet have the historical distance to be certain that the value dislocations of the 1960's and 1970's amount to the equivalent of the Fourth Great Awakening. McLoughlin suggests they did and devotes a chapter to their explication. Certainly, some of the customary features of an awakening were present: a suddenly enlarged youthful segment of the population that defied conventional morality in life and conventional standards in art and music; a growing sense of alienation from existing institutions, notably—but not only—the government; rising levels of public disorder and urban crime; and a decline in traditional party loyalties. But two elements seem to be missing: the awakening did not, for many caught up in it, involve a religious revival, and there has not been as yet a partisan realignment.

These are not necessarily fatal criticisms. A partisan realignment may yet occur and, indeed, might have occurred before this had the capture of the Democratic party by the followers of George McGovern not been followed by the public discrediting of the available alternative to McGovern Democracy, Richard Nixon and his Republican party.

Moreover, the secularization of educational and occupational elites that has been under way for half a century or more produced, by the 1960's, a large group of educated young persons for whom religion had little significance and who would respond to a value dislocation almost wholly in secular terms. That a profound reexamination of man's nature and a searching reevaluation of society could occur almost entirely outside the religious framework of Protestant theology in which such matters had traditionally been embedded was symbolized by the election of a Roman Catholic, John F. Kennedy, at the very beginning of this era, just two years before the SDS produced the Port Huron Statement. At about the same time, some theologians were announcing that "God is dead," others were celebrating the "secular city," Dietrich Bonhoeffer was suggesting that Christians should act as if God did not exist, and various sages were beginning to explain the virtues of "situational ethics." "Policy" became the goal of a cultural revitalization and "power" its source of energy. As McLoughlin notes, almost the only major social activist to make explicit use of any religious formula was Martin Luther King, Jr., and he invoked—Mahatma Gandhi.

Perhaps it was the almost wholly secular nature of the 1960's youth movement that helps explain the bitter opposition that, almost unnoticed, it evoked. Commentators remark that the 60's are over, that the mood has changed. This implies that what happened was merely a passing fad. But it was not, as attested by the continuing vitality of feminism, gay rights, and unfettered self-expression. The Reagan movement is animated in large part by a desire to contain and force back the legacy of the 60's, and many of the movement's members are hoping to make clear that those who challenge traditional values must be prepared—as most are not—to pay a high price.

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Every awakening has its traditionalist as well as its progressive wing; in the 1960's, the traditionalist one was slower to emerge, or at least slower to command the attention of the national press. Throughout this period, Reverend Billy Graham was one of the most popular Americans, having won as early as the 1950's the devoted support of millions of average citizens and the derisive contempt of editorialists and intellectuals. By the end of the 1970's, when the revival of fundamentalist, evangelical Protestantism was too widespread and too obvious to be ignored, in part because it included among its ranks a President of the United States, the national media expressed surprise at this "new" development.

The fundamentalist denominations have grown in members at least as fast as the establishment churches have lost them. Ministers such as Jerry Falwell, Bob Billings, and Pat Robertson are household names almost every place except where intellectuals gather. Alan Crawford estimates that the fundamentalist "electronic church" includes 36 wholly religious television stations, 1,300 religious radio stations, and dozens of gospel programs that buy time on regular commercial stations; in sum, these outlets may reach 100 million persons each week.

Ronald Reagan now speaks politically for these persons, among others; so, too, does Jimmy Carter, though to a lessened degree now that he has had to deal with the complexities of the real world. But they do not speak without challenge. The Right to Life party announced, shortly after the Republican national convention, that Reagan's selection of George Bush as a running mate ruled out any chance of that party's endorsing Reagan; Bush, it seems, had opposed the anti-abortion amendment. This move, characteristic of an ideological party preoccupied with doctrinal purity, may be taken by its political opponents as evidence that single-issue movements are a political menace. But those who do should not forget that, whatever the Right to Life *party* may say, "99 percent of the Right-to-Lifers" will, according to a party leader, vote for Reagan and Bush.

There is a counterpart social movement within the Democratic party: the feminists. The National Organization for Women, the National Abortion Rights Action League, and related groups made up the only faction attending the Democratic national convention to win decisively on all of their core issues over the determined opposition of the Carter administration. The feminists succeeded in committing the Democratic party to withholding campaign funds and political aid from candidates who do not support the Equal Rights Amendment and to endorsing federal financing of abortions for indigent women (a policy already rejected by Congress and the White House). These symbolic victories (their practical significance remains to be seen) are the culmination of a women's movement that is more than a century old but that has acquired special visibility and influence in periods of social awakenings. Feminism was born during the Second Great Awakening when women tried to become active in the anti-slavery societies and was revitalized during the Third Awakening when the drive for women's suffrage began in earnest.

The ideological energy of the 1980 election campaign will come in large measure from rival groups of women. Not since the volcanic struggles over prohibition and the suffrage sixty years ago have "women's issues" so dominated the attention of political activists. On no other question—not inflation, not unemployment, not foreign policy, not even taxes—are the opposing leaders so deeply and implacably opposed or so prepared to sacrifice almost every other consideration to their dominant concerns. In ordinary times, one would not be far off the mark to call the Democrats the party of full employment and social welfare and the Republicans the party of a stable currency and lower taxes. But these are not ordinary times. Despite the furor at Madison Square Garden over various economic planks in the Democratic platform, and despite the announced intention of traditional Democratic leaders to attack Reagan as an economic reactionary, the cutting edge of the partisan struggle is in reality very different. The two parties, for the first time since Prohibition, are chiefly divided—at least for the activists, and perhaps for many others as well—over social rather than economic issues.

But whereas women were clearly a faction at the Democratic convention, one that had to fight for its objectives and that might well have failed to attain them had not half the delegates been women, the issues raised by women at the Republican convention were scarcely matters of controversy. The Democratic party is a governing coalition that has within it an important social movement; the Republican party *is* such a movement.

RONALD REAGAN is not William Jennings Bryan, to say nothing of Billy Sunday or Jonathan Edwards; he is an uncommonly skillful politician, as yet untested in a national role, who has deftly placed himself at the forefront of a broad social movement. But he is not merely a politician; which is to say, he has not made merely expedient use of that movement. Dwight Eisenhower might have attracted the support of many of those who now support Reagan. But he would have done it differently. Rather than stating his views on busing, abortion, or the Equal Rights Amendment in terms so categorical and with conviction so undeniable as to make the candidate and the movement seem one, he would have moved, by nuance and style, by posture and carefully phrased statement, to preempt the favored position vis-à-vis this constituency and thus deny that position to all rivals, without at the

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same time eliminating the chance of making overtures to persons outside that constituency.

This difference between Eisenhower and Reagan, between the politics of mediation and generalization and the politics of conviction and particularity, is what makes the present moment so interesting. Reagan is at once a candidate for the Presidency and the spokesman of a social movement. We have not seen the like in our lifetimes. Such a combination of roles offers some substantial potential advantages. As Hadley Arkes remarked in a recent essay, Reagan has the opportunity to use his campaign for "shaping his coalition in an explicit, principled way," and by so doing to create "his own political capital." He thereby generates the authority that can enable him to govern, or at least to have a chance at governing, a bureaucracy that can rarely be managed but can sometimes be *led*.

But there are risks as well; what they are, and how one assesses them, depend very much on one's own beliefs about what issues are important and how they should be addressed. While I sympathize with much of the concern of Reaganism for home and family, for decency and a return to defensible principles, I am not certain what the government can do about these matters. It is not that I think there is no connection between public governance and private morality; it is rather that the instrumentalities of that relationship are very largely in the hands of judges or otherwise scattered about in a thousand constitutional nooks and crannies where no movement, and few laws, can make a difference. Much of the governmental action that has driven Reaganites to despair and outrage has been the action of courts: it was the Supreme Court that struck down anti-abortion laws, supported busing for purposes of school integration, liberalized the obscenity laws, and endorsed affirmative-action programs and their associated quotas. But of the nine current members of this Court, seven were appointed by Republican Presidents.

Of course, all that can be changed, but it is costly—very costly—in political capital. One can amend the Constitution, but as the proponents of the ERA have learned, that is exceptionally difficult and time-consuming if the matter is at all controversial. One can pass laws changing the jurisdiction of the Court, but Congress—almost any Congress—is reluctant to challenge the authority of the Court head on. (Congress has had countless opportunities to do this with respect to busing and has always backed down.) And one can alter the composition of the courts by new appointments, but that occurs at a slow and uncertain pace. In 1978, Congress increased the size of the federal judiciary by more than 30 percent, creating 152 new positions that Carter has been filling with Democrats. Since the Supreme Court hears but a tiny fraction of all the cases coming to federal court, the identity of these lower judges—now strongly shaped by a Democratic administration—will be at least as important as who fills the next one or two vacancies on the Supreme Court. Republicans are likely to discover that implementing their campaign pledge to change the judiciary is going to be more difficult, and less productive of dramatic results, than they may suppose, however desirable it may be in principle.

Moreover, the social movement headed by Reagan is now at flood tide; its high-water mark may be the November election. Win or lose, it might well begin to ebb. I have no particular ground for this conjecture other than the historical fact that in every preceding period of religious revival and broad cultural change, the forces of tradition have ultimately lost. Bryan not only lost the election but in the Scopes trial lost his dignity. The traditionalists won the struggle for Prohibition, but in so doing overreached and ultimately discredited themselves. The Social Gospel defeated, institutionally and politically, the revivalism of Billy Sunday, as the anti-slavery movement had earlier triumphed, after many reversals, over the effort to restore a more inward-looking, less worldly creed.

Historical comparisons are risky, and never more so than today when dramatic events can so quickly overtake plausible generalizations. And Reaganism is distinctly different in important respects from earlier traditionalist movements: it is not racist or nativist and it does not suppose that the United States is an isolated island in an irrelevant world. These differences are important, but perhaps not as important as one fundamental continuity. Every cultural awakening has ultimately enlarged the permissible limits of self-expression and enhanced the power of those who wished to rationalize society on behalf of progressive ends. The reason for this, I think, is clear: every such period of broad cultural change has sooner or later been dominated by young, educated activists who have left as their legacy the values implicit in liberal higher education.

But whatever may happen in the struggle over issues of home and family, far more important matters are at stake. The gravest uncertainty is the relationship between these ultimate issues and the Reagan movement. To me, having a strong, well-managed defense establishment and a foreign policy willing to take seriously the containment of the Soviet Union at those places where its expansionist drives and proxy "wars of national liberation" thereaten our vital interests are matters of supreme importance.

Ronald Reagan has spoken on these matters and will speak again. His views represent a significant departure from the McGovern foreign policy that has been embedded in a "Carter" administration, though in response to Iran and Afghanistan, Carter himself has tried (how hard is still

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uncertain) to redirect these policies at the margin. But on these issues, Reagan is speaking more as a candidate representing a certain inclination in political thought and less as the leader of a social movement. Many of the groups that have become part of Reaganism have no views on foreign policy other than an abstract pugnacity that takes offense, understandably enough, when American citizens are captured or otherwise pushed around overseas. There is a clear sentiment in public-opinion polls in favor of increased military spending; indeed, Congress, as it has almost always done in the past, has reacted to that sentiment by voting increased defense appropriations. The Soviet Union is unmistakably held in low esteem.

But these general opinions are simply that—general. One can derive no particular defense posture, no specific foreign initiative, no coherent and sustainable policy from such opinions (though *without* those opinions, only a disastrous policy is feasible). These views, in short, are a necessary but not sufficient condition for a redirection of our foreign affairs.

And even these general dispositions have some ominous nuances. Some members of the Reagan movement speak of the Trilateral Commission in much the same way as others once spoke of "munitions makers," "international bankers," and "European wars." Such comments cannot be reassuring to our allies; they might be forgiven for thinking we are about to exchange an improvised go-it-alone policy disguised as an alliance for a calculated go-it-alone policy devoid of disguise.

There is no reason why a reassertion of traditional values and even a quick temper need stand in the way of a coherent foreign policy; indeed, a willingness to act boldly when core values are at stake is part of what has been missing from American leadership in recent years. But there is a gap nonetheless between the passions of those who have brought Reagan to a presidential candidacy and the requirements of being a President. Popular instincts as to what is worth preserving, even at great risk, are usually worth heeding; popular instincts as to how best to do the preserving are often another matter. Our nation's brief flirtation with imperialism in the 19th century during the height of one awakening and the support that the Spanish-American War enjoyed among both fundamentalists and progressive adherents of the Social Gospel are worth recalling. Ronald Reagan's greatest challenge is to find a principle of statesmanship that can draw the support of a social movement without being imprisoned by it.

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Containment for the 80's

Walter Laqueur

WHATEVER the result of the coming election, problems of defense and foreign policy will demand more of the time, thought, and energy of the President and his advisers than during any period since World War II. Furthermore, the options available to them will be more limited than at any time in recent memory. It could even be argued, with only a little exaggeration, that whoever the President, the American responses to the foreign challenges facing the nation will be more or less the same—unless he chooses to ignore them, which, to say the least, will be difficult.

Much, of course, will depend on the personality of the President and his foreign-policy advisers, their standing at home and abroad, whether they will readily accept the dismal facts of international life, or whether, still nurturing certain illusions, they will only reluctantly draw conclusions which should have been obvious from the beginning, whether they will pursue their policies forcefully and skillfully or half-heartedly, with frequent changes in direction. Thus the "more or less" may still be of great, perhaps decisive, importance. But it still seems true that the years ahead will be a time almost without alternatives, partly because of objective difficulties like the enormous handicaps of a democratic country in a world system consisting mainly of non-democratic societies, partly as a consequence of world economic upheavals, but above all as the result of past mistakes, neglect, delusions of various kinds, and, generally speaking, the bankruptcy of the old approaches in foreign policy.

During the past year, President Carter has used very strong language and proclaimed a new doctrine concerning the Persian Gulf; the House of Representatives by a vote of more than five-to-one has authorized $6 billion more for defense than the administration wanted; newspapers all over the country have carried articles pointing out that the Soviet Union has been greatly outspending the U.S. and its allies, so that today it is considerably stronger in almost every aspect of military power except aircraft carriers and perhaps nuclear submarines. Views voiced only yesterday by the "alarmists" and "extremists" of the Committee on the Present Danger have suddenly acquired respectability.

There are, to be sure, some who regard all this as one of the periodical waves of hysteria afflicting America, and who have warned against a return to the "cold war"—a warning obviously based on the belief that the cold war ended years ago. Some of these advocates of "sanity" simply deny the Soviet military build-up; they dismiss it as a statistical illusion. Others acknowledge that there has been a Soviet build-up, but argue that it is of no consequence since in the contemporary world military power cannot be translated into political influence. Yet others maintain at one and the same time that NATO is still stronger than the Warsaw Pact and that American power has declined as the result of inexorable historical changes about which nothing can be done. According to one such source (the Center for Defense Information), Soviet influence twenty-two years ago extended to 14 percent of mankind, whereas today it covers only 12 percent.* There has been no erosion of American military power, says the CDI, but the U.S. is no longer able to control world events because of dramatic shifts in economic relationships among major Western nations and Japan and especially between the Third World and the United States and the Soviet Union respectively.

The meaning of a statement like this is uncertain. Does it imply that the Soviet Union and the Third World have become economically stronger than the U.S. and its allies, or that the economic ties between them have become more extensive? But since the statement is wrong whichever way it is interpreted, not too much time should be wasted refuting it. The GNP of the United States is, roughly speaking, twice that of the Soviet Union. But this figure offers little comfort. While

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* With equal justice it could be argued that Soviet influence extended in the late 1950's to some 36 percent of mankind (China, the Soviet Union, etc.) whereas today it is very nearly nil because hardly anyone is left who believes in Communism on that side of the Berlin Wall. In the field of foreign policy, there is no assertion sufficiently ludicrous to be excluded from the columns of at least some of our newspapers.

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wealthy America with a GNP of more than $2 trillion has not been able to project its influence into other parts of the globe, a bankrupt little country like Cuba, with a GNP amounting to about 0.65 percent of America's, has been able to do so. Quite obviously, there is something wrong with the idea that the "dramatic shifts" in the world economy are at the bottom of American impotence in foreign and military policy.

It is true that there is no automatic link between the level of military spending and an effective defense and foreign policy, but the reasons are not those given by the advocates of doing nothing or even cutting back. It goes—or ought to go—without saying that the challenges to America and to world peace will multiply in the years ahead unless an overall military balance is restored. This requires more than assuring the credibility of the U.S. deterrent, modernizing our forces, introducing some form of selective service, creating a three-ocean navy, building up a rapid-deployment force, and expanding civil-defense planning. All this is necessary, but it is not sufficient. The decline of U.S. influence is not primarily rooted in the fact that the United States has sixteen divisions as compared with the Soviet Union's 165, that it has fewer missiles and many fewer tanks. The more fundamental cause of this decline is the belief which has widely gained ground abroad that the United States lacks the understanding, the discipline, and the will to use the power it already has. Hence the conviction among friends and foes alike that the United States has become a second-rate power.

THUS, to be effective, an American program of rearmament will have to be part of a general strategy. It is true that the challenges facing us are many and that they differ in character, but it is also true that the *basic* issues are few and do not defy human comprehension.

This applies particularly to the essential facts about the Soviet regime. The Soviet regime is, as many say, conservative in character; its conservatism does not, however, preclude the expansion of its sphere of influence. The Soviet leaders are indeed prudent, cautious, and even moderate men who will not, as a rule, take foolish risks; but their moderation can be taken for granted only if they are confronted with equal strength and equal determination.

The Soviet leadership truly wants détente with the industrialized countries of the West. But its concept of détente is quite different from the one that at least until recently has prevailed in the United States. It certainly does not entail real peace, for without the existence of foreign enemies, the Soviet regime would lose its legitimacy.

Détente, as the Soviet leaders see it, means negotiations on arms limitation, trade, aid, and technology transfer; it also means political warfare against the West, not excluding local wars ("of liberation") outside the NATO area. It certainly does not mean an end to "hegemonism"; on the contrary, détente, as Brezhnev and his colleagues have frequently said, creates better conditions for the expansion of Soviet influence. In brief, the basic difference between détente and the cold war is mainly that Soviet propaganda becomes less shrill during détente.

Ever since the end of World War II, U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union has vacillated between exaggerated and hence unfulfillable hopes, and largely verbal truculence. There are some common interests between the two superpowers but they are fewer than often assumed. The overriding common interest is, of course, the prevention of war, and, if possible, arms control. The expectations attached to SALT in 1972—that it would make the world a safer place and incidentally save a great deal of money—are no longer widely shared. Experience has shown that under the SALT agreement the Soviet Union has forged ahead, building, roughly speaking, as many missiles as it would have done in any case.

It is unrealistic to expect the Soviet leaders to accept any freeze, or reduction, which would undo the advantages they have gained during the last decade. This could be achieved only if the Soviet leaders were confronted with an unshakable resolve on the part of the West to match their arsenal. However, a hundred and one reasons will be adduced in Western capitals to the effect that such an approach would be economically ruinous, morally indefensible, politically dangerous, and militarily counterproductive. Therefore, even if old-style SALT negotiations should be resumed, it is virtually certain that they will not lead to any significant success.

In any event, at the moment, the main Soviet aim is to "decouple" European from American defense efforts. The German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt has been told in Moscow that the U.S. would disregard the fate of its allies in the event of a nuclear war; the Europeans have been warned not to expand NATO (by the inclusion of Spain); and promises have been made that countries refusing to station NATO missiles will not be subject to Soviet "retaliation."

In the meantime, the Soviet superiority in manpower in Europe (160,000 men) is the least worrying aspect of the skewed balance of power. The salient facts are that 18,000 Soviet tanks now face 6,200 of NATO's; and more ominous yet, that whereas 5,000 Western anti-armor systems confront 36,000 Warsaw Pact vehicles, the Soviet Union has 7,400 systems facing 20,000 armored Western vehicles. Soviet superiority in the air is 2.5 to 1. The Warsaw Pact forces have grown since 1968 at a far higher rate than during the period of the "cold war." Thus paradoxically, from a military point of view, détente has been less advantageous to the West than the cold war. According to a recent authoritative study by Abraham Becker

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(of RAND), Western assumptions that the Soviets may want to reduce their burden of military spending for economic reasons is not borne out by the facts. Soviet defense programs proceed quite independently of civilian programs.

If nothing much can be expected of arms-control negotiations, neither can much be expected from the development of economic relations between the two countries. Soviet spokesmen have argued all along that economic cooperation with a profitable and expanding market (meaning the Eastern bloc) would benefit American businessmen and workers alike, and that only the political fanaticism and the shortsightedness of certain reactionary circles have prevented this. There is no denying that certain branches of the U.S. economy have benefited from exporting to the Soviet Union, but whether the country has gained is a moot point: what is good for Armand Hammer is not necessarily good for the nation. Most of OECD trade with the East is done on the basis of government-subsidized credit to Soviet importers; the Soviet Union buys goods on credits at a "consensus rate" which is considerably lower than the going commercial rate—the rate which applies, for instance, to the poor countries of Asia and Africa, or even inside Europe and America. The London *Times* recently reached the conclusion that "consensus" was a euphemism for subsidy, and that it was not at all clear whether the OECD was actually selling goods to the Soviet Union or giving them away.*

Be that as it may, the total volume of Soviet foreign trade is relatively small. If Soviet spokesmen point to the great progress achieved in Soviet-West German trade in recent years and urge Americans to emulate the Germans, this is no more than playing off one Western nation against another. For the total size of the pie, considering the inflationary process and increase in prices, is not going to grow very much. The "great progress" in Soviet-West German trade during the last year, if further analyzed, shows hardly an increase in volume at all; its value "rose" because the Germans had to pay more for Soviet oil and gas.

THE SCOPE of diplomatic negotiations with the Soviet Union will also be extremely limited in the years to come. There is always the chance of unforeseen developments, perhaps as the result of a change in the Soviet leadership, and it goes without saying that any prospects, however slim, should be explored. But there exists yet another possibility of which full use has not been made for a long time, and that is to speak directly to the Soviet and East European peoples. The best, perhaps the only, hope of peaceful coexistence is the emergence of an informed public opinion behind the Iron Curtain which may gradually become a factor of political influence in Soviet decision-making.

It is equally important to speak to citizens of Third World countries. At the present time, Western radio stations provide the most effective means by far of reaching many millions of people in countries where there is a state monopoly of information; in the years to come television may play an even more important role. Communist governments have violently protested for many years against these activities. The justification for these complaints is not readily obvious since they themselves broadcast on an even larger scale through three different kinds of channels: the official stations (Radio Moscow), the semi-official (such as Radio Peace and Progress), and the "anonymous" stations (such as the Voice of Free Turkey, Voice of Iran, etc.) which are located in Soviet-bloc countries but of which any knowledge is officially denied. Furthermore, Soviet leaders have always emphasized that, détente or no détente, the ideological struggle will go on and even be intensified; and radio stations, needless to say, are among the main vehicles in the struggle of ideas.

But the potentialities of the Western radios have not remotely been exhausted. The annual budgets of the Voice of America and of Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe are about $80 million each, a tiny sum by comparison with their importance on the one hand and the cost of modern weapon systems on the other. However, as in the case of defense, bigger allocations would not automatically result in a better product. If a country has no clear and consistent foreign policy, broadcasting this fact to the world at large will not do much good; it may, in fact, be positively harmful.

Yet even when confusion has been at its height in Washington, foreign broadcasting has served a useful purpose by keeping millions of people informed about the state of the world. Some of the services of Radio Free Europe have been very effective and the impact of Radio Liberty has also been considerable, albeit more limited. For many Russians (as Solzhenitsyn says) it is the main source on events in their *own* country.

The Voice of America is the least effective of the three services, thanks in part to the guidelines under which it operates. What these are can be surmised on the basis of the RFE guidelines which were published several years ago. Under the heading "Restraints," program directors are told that emotionalism, vituperation, vindictiveness, stridency, belligerency, arrogance, pomposity, pretentiousness, and condescension should be avoided; that there should be no sweeping generalizations, propagandistic argumentation, gratuitous value judgments, unsupported criticism of the Communist regime, inflammatory program-

* To provide yet another example: the European Community sells its butter surplus to the Soviet Union at the price of about 50 cents a pound; it reaches the Soviet customer at $2.30 a pound. The same is true with regard to meat, etc. What the Soviet government does with the revenue thus gained is anyone's guess.

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ming, incitement to revolt; that tactical advice should be avoided ("except in unusual circumstances, and then only to calm moods in tense situations"); that no programs should be based upon or use rumors, unsubstantiated information, gossip, slander, or spiteful references; that attacks on the stations by the Soviet and East European media should not be commented upon without prior consultation with the director—and so on and on and on.

No one will argue that pomposity and vindictiveness make for effective broadcasting or that a great deal of tact is not needed to get one's message across. But it is also true that if program directors were to take the guidelines literally, they might reach the conclusion that nothing is quite safe except perhaps mentioning that Leonid Brezhnev is a leading member of the Communist party. If, on the other hand, they were to draw attention to the fact that sixty-three years have already passed since the Bolshevik revolution, this could be construed, in certain circumstances, as inflammatory material, even though it is not based upon gossip or rumor.

The guidelines date back to the heyday of détente when Senator J. William Fulbright demanded the abolition of these stations as "relics of the cold war." The fact that, in the absence of another sponsor, Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe had been financed for many years by the CIA did not help either; there was also a desire to avoid embarrassment to the host countries such as West Germany, which were under considerable Soviet pressure to remove them. But the time has clearly come for a new departure in the field of international broadcasting. It will not radically transform the world scene in a year or two, but it is an important weapon in the arsenal of democracy. Through the dissemination of factual information on the state of the world it could make an important contribution to international understanding, weakening the forces of repression and censorship. International broadcasting is one of the instruments of U.S. foreign policy which has never been fully used.

II

AMERICA's main problem in Europe, paradoxically, is not the Soviets, who are more or less predictable, but its own allies, who are not. Here again the basic issues are by no means difficult to grasp.

Throughout the three decades of its existence NATO has gone through many crises, yet with all its shortcomings, it has fulfilled a vital function. During the last few years there has been a change for the worse, manifesting itself in a marked lack of unity and purpose among its members. While the "relentless pace of Soviet military expansion" continues (to quote the recently published annual report of the London-based Institute for Strategic Studies), some of our European allies have decided to lower their defenses.

Resolutions were passed in 1977 and the year after to increase defense spending by 3 percent, yet in many cases even this modest target has not been met. Indeed, although those resolutions were passed unanimously, there was foot-dragging and open resistance from the very beginning. The manifesto of the British Labor party specifically opposes the stationing of cruise missiles; the Danes, the Dutch, and the Belgians are showing the utmost reluctance to play host to theater-nuclear forces and are demanding that efforts should first be made to restrain the build-up of Soviet forces by negotiations.

The Soviet leaders, needless to say, are perfectly willing to negotiate, but they do not have the slightest wish to give up their military advantage; and while the Europeans dally, Soviet SS-20's, designed for the express purpose of hitting West European targets, are being deployed at the rate of one a week. According to the defense correspondent of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, the West European governments genuinely wanted to induce their parliaments to vote the increase, but they did not permit the military leadership to give the true picture of the situation, for fear that this would only create defeatism—the belief that defense had become pointless and that it would be preferable to bow to a Soviet *diktat*. Instead they took the position that although there is a military imbalance, it should not frighten anyone.

It has been argued that opposition to strengthening defenses has come from the smaller members of NATO; perhaps they could be ignored? But in West Germany there has also been growing uneasiness, and in Britain, to give another example, even the pro-NATO wing of the British Labor party has become reconciled to a concept which may lead them eventually to unilateral strategic disarmament. Thus, the United States finds itself in the absurd and undignified position of having to persuade its European allies that measures aiming at a modest increase in defense spending and the modernization of theater-nuclear forces are primarily in their own interest. But if the Europeans see (or pretend to see) no danger in the military imbalance, how can the United States make them realize that the threat exists? Equally, if they feel too weak to counteract the danger, how can the United States generate the will in them to do so?

A NATO review published in 1971 states that "although a military balance still exists between East and West when their military potential is viewed as a whole, the Warsaw Pact maintains a clear superiority of conventional forces in the European region. This advantage is assumed to be kept in check by the deterrent effect of NATO's nuclear weapons and the inherent risks of escalation. Strategic-nuclear parity or even superiority appears to be a Soviet objective. Should they reach

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this goal, the balance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact could swing in favor of the latter, thus enabling the USSR to take greater risks in trying to impose their will not only on their allies but on NATO countries and the rest of the world as well."

This is precisely what has now happened, even though the attempt is made to conceal the political consequences behind a pretense of firmness and determination. The more vulnerable Western Europe has become, the more exposed to pressure and blackmail, the more it has been said in Paris and Bonn that Europe should become an independent force in world affairs: wherever European and American interests coincide, there should be full cooperation; when they diverge, Europe should go its own way. Whether in such a case America also has the right to pursue its own policy is not altogether clear; it would appear that while U.S. military involvement in Europe is still taken for granted, America should not expect too much by way of reciprocity.

Obviously the emergence of a strong and independent Europe would be in the best American interest; the imbalance inside the alliance was always a source of weakness. Redressing the balance would make it possible to reduce the number of U.S. troops stationed in Europe and to deploy them elsewhere. Thus there are excellent reasons to take the European challenge seriously: the sooner changes are made, the better.

One possibility would be the transformation of NATO from a defensive alliance, based on the assumption that an attack against one is an attack against all, into an alliance with limited liability such as, in effect, some European leaders have suggested. (In theory NATO has been such an alliance all along; the treaty, according to article five, involves no automatic commitment on the part of the U.S. to go to war but merely "such action as each deemed necessary.") Under this arrangement America would expect the Europeans to provide a considerably larger share of troops and equipment, and they would have a larger say in running the alliance.

A defensive alliance with limited liability entails heavy risks: ambiguity may invite attack. But this is a risk that perhaps has to be taken: America's European allies will not behave more responsibly unless they are given more responsibility. At present, more often than not, they exhibit no such responsibility in their "independent" policies. A "more forthright assertion in the Middle East" means, above all, French help to the Iraqis to build their nuclear bomb; "concern about Afghanistan" means that Brezhnev is told that trade relations will not suffer, and that, generally speaking, peace is divisible; "concern about the balance of power in Europe" means that European leaders are less afraid of offending the American President than of offending the Politburo.

In some respects, to be sure, a Paris-Bonn axis would be in a better position than the United States to organize Europe's defense. There was great resistance to the introduction of an American neutron bomb into Europe, whereas the appearance of a French neutron bomb hardly caused a ripple. There is every reason to believe that the reaction to European cruise missiles would be similar. Psychologically as well as politically, France and West Germany would be in a much better position to bring the smaller countries into line, whatever the line might be.

Yet the difficulties are enormous. The building of a West European military force capable of deterring the Soviet Union without American assistance seems unlikely, for at least three reasons. While Europe may be economically capable of undertaking such an effort—the GNP of West Germany and France is as big as the Soviet Union's—the European public is not ready to support it. Even if it were prepared, it would be held back by Soviet threats to unleash the terrors of the earth if Western Europe were to establish a credible defense posture; Western European nerves are not very strong these days. And even if both the economic and political readiness existed, there would still be the problem of a nuclear-armed Germany, for without this any effective European defense seems unthinkable. But West Germany does not want nuclear arms, and its European allies want it to have them even less.

The alternative is a Western European defense organization without a capacity to resist, based mainly on West German trade balances and French rhetoric. No great gifts of prophecy are needed to predict the likely fate of a coalition of this kind. According to the Paris weekly *Le Point*, the Russians compare the French defense effort to a dragonfly, a colorful and interesting specimen but not exactly a heavyweight among animals. From time to time the Germans will remind the French President that French military power is simply not credible as the main guarantor for the defense of Europe. But not wishing to offend Giscard, they have issued these reminders in too muted a tone to be effective.

What if Europe should prefer to steer its own neutral course? The United States would have no choice but to respect such a decision even though it means the absorption of Western Europe into the Soviet sphere of influence. This would be a gradual process. For tactical reasons, if for no others, the Soviet Union would impose controls slowly and in stages. Western Europe, it can be safely assumed, would still be free to trade with the United States and would also enjoy a large degree of domestic freedom for a long time to come. But with all this, it would be the beginning of the end of a whole era of European history.

There are not many genuine, wholehearted neutralists to be found in Europe, so that faced with a choice of this kind, Gaullists as well as

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most left-wingers in the British Labor party and among the German Social Democrats will think of a dozen good reasons not to leave the alliance just yet. These half- and quarter-neutralists want to have the best of all worlds from within the defensive alliance, with the protection provided by the United States. This has gone on for too long and it has had a demoralizing effect. Supporters and opponents of the alliance in Europe should be forced to stand up and be counted. New arrangements should be made with greater responsibilities accepted by Europe, in which decisions will be reached more speedily and, once reached, will be binding. An alliance reorganized on these lines would stand a good chance of providing an effective defense for Europe for the rest of the century.

The worst-case scenario is not the voluntary dissolution of the alliance, which is most unlikely, but the erosion of NATO from within and its transformation into a noncommittal debating society evading hard choices, with some members pulling in one direction, others in the opposite, neither with much conviction. If it should come to this, the U.S. should consider replacing NATO by a system of bilateral defense agreements with, say, Germany, Britain, and Italy.

III

THE DANGERS facing America in Europe are grave but there is no immediate threat, only slow deterioration. The acute crises are now erupting outside Europe, and they include the political repercussions of the global recession we have entered. Most forecasts for 1981 are gloomy.* There will be no significant real growth, unemployment in the industrialized countries will rise by more than 3 million (with over half likely to occur in the United States), and there will also be a fresh inflationary outburst. Some of the more radical pessimists now predict a downturn even more devastating than the great depression of the late 1920's and the 1930's.

There is more than one cause for this, but the single most important by far is the fact that the world economic system can no longer sustain the present oil prices. According to OECD spokesmen, not ordinarily given to hyperbole, the oil-price rises during the past two years will have reduced the OECD countries' real economic growth by as much as 5 percent by late 1981—a "mind-boggling figure."

As for the consequences for the poor countries, they are catastrophic. The only way those countries can pay their oil bills is by getting loans from international organizations, and they can only get these loans if they "adjust" their economies. Such adjustment may make economic sense in the long run, but it may also mean starvation and death. In any case, even the international institutions can no longer cope with a problem of such magnitude.

The leaders of the oil-producing countries have argued all along that it is utter nonsense to put the blame for the economic misfortunes of the rest of the world on the rise in oil prices. In their view the real cause is incompetence on the part of the rich industrial countries. But the repercussions are felt even more strongly in the less-developed countries and also in the Communist bloc. This year Brazil will need $10-12 billion to cover its oil bills, South Korea $6 billion, India and Yugoslavia $2.5-3 billion—to provide but a few examples. Altogether the deficit of the less-developed countries amounts now to $70 billion, and their foreign debts next year will be $400-450 billion. There is no possible way to cover these deficits by either "recycling" or increasing exports; most of the LDC's traditionally import more than they export.

WHEN OPEC first challenged the international political and economic order there was great enthusiasm in Africa and Asia. Ali Masrui, the well-known Third World ideologist, wrote:

> From the point of view of millions of Asians and Africans, the Arab oil sanctions against select Western countries will probably rank in history alongside Japan's victory over Russia in 1905 as milestones in the story of how Asians and Africans discovered their own potential power against Caucasian might.

And elsewhere:

> And then one day the term "energy crisis" entered the vocabulary of international affairs. A developing-country poet might have written as William Wordsworth did of the French Revolution, "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive; But to be young was very heaven. . . ."

Masrui surely exaggerated a little. African poets are more often than not in prison, unless they have moved to an American or European exile; their poems, in any case, are not about oil. But it is true that there was genuine satisfaction in 1973. How distant this seems now, how misplaced the feeling of bliss! One need only think of the starving citizens of Professor Masrui's native Uganda, a country virtually in ruins, and the neighboring East African states.

The reaction described by Professor Masrui is an interesting case of false consciousness which OPEC has largely succeeded in perpetuating to this very day. Despite the fact that OPEC policy has been an enormous drain on the Third World, despite the massive exploitation of the poorest of the poor, there has been to this day full support for OPEC policies, at least in public; private comment, admittedly, has been less friendly. Accord-

* The *OECD Economic Outlook* (July 1980) begins with the following words: "Once again the short-term prospects for the OECD area are dominated by a massive oil shock." The *World Economic Outlook* of the International Monetary Fund similarly begins: "The world economic picture is rather grim."

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ing to some observers, this shows the depth of resentment in the LDC's toward the "North." But the real explanation is that while OPEC has so far given little help to the countries in need, there is always the hope that such help will still be forthcoming in exchange for political support. Then, too, the number of professional Third World spokesmen is relatively small, and some well-placed handouts may at least temporarily quell the outward manifestations of dissatisfaction.

There are, roughly speaking, two ways to compensate the LDC's for the losses they have incurred. They could be sold oil at special reduced rates. Even though the introduction of a two-tier price system would cause major problems, the difficulties need not be insurmountable.* Alternatively, OPEC could provide massive economic aid to the countries hardest hit. But the total aid given by OPEC to LDC's this year does not even amount to $5 billion, less than the energy bill of a country like South Korea alone. An analysis of the disbursements shows that many OPEC countries (Algeria, Iran, Nigeria, Venezuela) give a considerably smaller percentage of their GNP than Western Europe. Most OPEC aid has gone to the Arab confrontation states such as Syria and, until recently, Egypt (which are actually oil exporters!) as well as to the PLO. Non-Muslim countries have received virtually nothing, with the exception of India which got some $200 million in 1978—less than 10 percent of its oil bill. India, it will be recalled, has a big Muslim minority, and its good will is important to OPEC for political reasons.

There is only one way to solve the problem. Polite requests and appeals to morality have no effect, but political pressure would. If the LDC's were to withdraw their political support from OPEC, there would in all probability be a spectacular and immediate rise in economic help. But if political pressure were to fail, the threat of military action by non-oil-producing LDC's with fewer inhibitions than the United States would do the trick.†

OPEC has an obvious interest in obfuscating the conflict between the oil-producing countries and the non-oil producing LDC's, and one cannot blame them for sending up smokescreens of various kinds. But, equally, the United States and its allies have every reason to bring this conflict into stark relief. Continued failure to do so will spell disaster for hundreds of millions of people. Pressure will have to come primarily from the Third World, but the Western democracies can do a great deal to speed up the learning process in Asia and Africa.

THIS brings us to the general issue of U.S. relations with Third World countries. During the last decade the Soviet Union has considerably increased its influence in the Third World, not because Soviet ideology is so attractive or because the Soviets have provided so much disinterested help, but as the result of some very astute maneuvering. Anyone who bothers to read the 259 pages of the Final Declaration of the Havana Conference of the Nonaligned Countries (September 1979) is bound to realize to what extent this movement has been mobilized for the aims of Soviet policy. The very fact that Cuba, a Soviet vassal, now appears as a leading nonaligned country shows how much the movement has changed its erstwhile character. Not all countries are happy about this development, and U Nu of Burma, one of the founders of the nonaligned bloc, recently said that it could no longer be considered nonaligned. Indeed, at present some twenty Soviet proxies dictate policy to the majority.

Nevertheless there is every reason to believe that the United States can still reverse this process and improve its relations with many Third World countries. Not because we share values and a common ideological heritage with them; the UNESCO suggestions favoring universal press censorship are just one illustration that Third World dictatorships (the democracies can be counted on the fingers of one hand) have little use for Western ideals. Nor is it true that since (as some Westerners argue) Third World countries are all "nationalist," they are bound to clash with the Soviet Union and to befriend the West, provided only the West tries to accommodate them. They certainly do wish to remain independent, but the West can only help them in this by standing firm against Soviet expansionism. Most of those countries are situated nearer to the Soviet Union and its allies than to the United States; elementary wisdom must tell Third World politicians to look as a counterweight for the support of the superpower which can do them less harm, simply because it is more distant and has the smaller appetite. But if the second superpower were no longer to count as a political and military force, it would be self-defeating to seek its help. For, as the Chinese proverb rightly says, distant waters do not extinguish a fire.

All this ought to be self-evident, but it is only beginning to be understood—yet another massive

* Such a two-tier system does in fact exist now in Latin America. Mexico and Venezuela supply oil to their neighbors at 70 percent of the price, and 30 percent is automatically invested in these countries on a long-term basis. The arrangement is meant to serve as political insurance against the Castroist forces.

† The purely military difficulties involved in seizing the oilfields have been exaggerated to a ridiculous extent. According to a 1975 Congressional Research Service study, a force of five to seven divisions would be required, twenty squadrons of aircraft, sixteen aircraft carriers, 128 cruisers and destroyers, etc. The British historian D.C. Watt has commented that this force would be bigger than the Allied force which took Sicily from the Wehrmacht in 1943 and slightly larger than the one landed in Normandy on D-Day. The danger that the installations would be destroyed has been equally magnified; the oilfields would work again within a matter of weeks.

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case of false consciousness. Ultimately Third World countries are bound to realize where their real interest lies. But the learning process may be long, and there are forces which have a vested interest in seeing that it should remain forever unfinished.

How to shorten the process? The recently published report of the Brandt commission purports to show a way.* But it deals only with the socio-economic aspects of the problem and entirely disregards politics. All problems are subsumed in a conflict between "North" and "South," ignoring not only the conflict between oil- and non-oil-producing countries, but also the fact that of the 150-odd wars which have occurred since 1945, all but a few have taken place between non-Western nations. The report decries the high level of defense spending among "Northern" countries, ignoring the fact that on a GNP per-capita basis such expenditure is much higher in many "Southern" countries.

When documents of this kind mention "Northern" obduracy and meanness, and when they invoke "Northern" duties, responsibilities, and obligations, they always except the Communist half of the North. Thus, the chapter about "East European involvement" in the Brandt report provides some comic relief in an otherwise unfunny story. It says that the East European countries have expressed their willingness to cooperate and share in international initiatives. They have opened a "dialogue" with the secretariat of the Brandt commission and have expressed their interest in further contacts. They have assured the secretariat that they are observing the problems of the Third World closely, and that they are fully aware of the great needs of the developing countries. They share the belief in the necessity of change in the international economic and financial system and institutions. What the reader will never learn is that Communist countries contribute 0.04 percent per capita of their GNP for development aid.

Moreover, an analysis of aid extended to Third World countries shows that there is an inverse ratio between the help given and the political benefits reaped. The countries which have given little or nothing—the Soviet bloc, China, but also Japan and OPEC—are not subjected to political attack, they are never held responsible for existing global inequalities. No one asks them to undertake a large-scale transfer of resources. On the other hand, the willingness of the democratic countries to extend help is seen as an admission of guilt. At the same time the activities of the multinational corporations, which engage in most of the trade, are regarded with the deepest suspicion, as a hardly veiled form of exploitation and even a political threat to local governments.

PARADOXICALLY, the lesson of the experience of several decades is that political relations with Third World countries would be better today if there had been little or no economic aid, if trade relations and contacts in general had been kept to a minimum. But just as Western countries cannot react with indifference to starvation and disease in the poorest countries even if they bear not the slightest responsibility for their plight, even if their misfortune has been caused by the corruption or the incompetence or the ideological fanaticism of their own rulers, the United States and the other democracies also have a vital interest in helping with the economic development of Asian and African countries. But their capacity to help is not infinite and, needs being equal, preference should be given to countries whose attitude toward the West is friendly rather than hostile. If, for instance, as seems likely, India is beset by economic difficulties in the years to come, it is only reasonable that help should be given by the Soviet Union, in view of the fact that Indian foreign policy has increasingly veered toward the Soviet Union.

The advantages of bilateral relationships with Third World countries are obvious and, with certain exceptions, they should become the future model; in this respect, as in some others, America could learn from the Soviet experience. The worst, the most self-defeating approach, is to deal with the Third World *en bloc*. Hannah Arendt, during the last year of her life, greatly shocked a German New Left interviewer when, being asked about her attitude toward the Third World, she said that to the best of her knowledge there was no such thing. Yet she was perfectly right: just as there is no "North," there is no Third World as a unit; the problems facing each country are different, and this fact, so obvious yet so often disregarded, should guide U.S. foreign policy.

The United States is not strong enough to try influencing developments in every part of the world; many countries, not to put it too finely, can safely be left to stew in their own juices. This, for obvious geopolitical reasons, may not be true for Central America. Nor is it true of the Middle East. But even in these regions U.S. policy will have to vary from country to country. Thus, for example, the less visible Americans are in Iran, a country in a state of anarchy likely to last for a long time, the better. In Turkey, for a variety of reasons, political as well as psychological, Europe rather than America should take the initiative. As for Saudi Arabia, only U.S. bases inside the country, however small and inconspicuous, can guarantee the security of vital American (and Western) interests.

According to current mythology, the troubles of the U.S. in the Third World are rooted in its past association with and reliance on corrupt authori-

* For a fuller discussion of the Brandt Commission report, see "East-West/North-South" by P.T. Bauer and B.S. Yamey in the September COMMENTARY.—ED.

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tarian regimes. But in actual fact these allies were by no means more repressive, reactionary, or corrupt than those now riding high as leaders of the nonaligned camp. Their misfortune was that they were less effective. Ideological professions in the Third World should not be taken too seriously; "Left" and "Right" make little if any sense. It is what Third World politicians do that counts, not what they say. A far "Left" regime may sometimes be preferable to one of the "Right"—the difference between the two may anyway be invisible to the naked eye. There may even be room for limited collaboration with a Third World regime that is Communist, just as there has been some cooperation with Yugoslavia, provided it is not a Soviet satellite and its foreign policy is genuinely nonaligned.

There exist endless possibilities for improving the U.S. position in Asia and Africa in the years to come. But no progress will be achieved until the United States succeeds in regaining respect in these parts, and while this means much more than military power, military power is a necessary minimum. The United States has to be recognized again as an ally that can be relied upon, a power that cannot be abused with impunity. One day the meek may inherit the earth, but the day has not yet come, and in any case the Third World may be inherited last.

IV

IN SUM: despite all the moaning and groaning over the intractable complexity of the world today, seldom if ever has there been so little room for legitimate differences of opinion with regard to the problems facing the United States and the ways of dealing with them:

- Toward the Soviet Union our policy has to be one of firmness, the only approach likely to safeguard peaceful coexistence. The main argument against appeasement (i.e., détente Russian-style) is that it increases the danger of military confrontation, unless of course it is pursued consistently to the very end—that is, complete surrender. But even the most persistent advocates of détente, played according to Soviet rules, are likely to draw the line somewhere, and it is then that a very dangerous situation is bound to result—dangerous for America and world peace.

- Toward our European allies, our approach should be based on friendship, common values, and interests as in the past. But in every friendship there comes a time of crisis when everything is to be gained by a showdown, airing openly and honestly existing differences, and deciding together how much cooperation there is to be in future.

- With the developing countries our relations should be based on self-interest and good will, but on no account should the responsibility for the economic, social, and political ills of the "Third World" be accepted, and on no account should we deal with those countries as a group.

ENUMERATING the challenges confronting the United States makes them appear more formidable than they really are, and it also creates a distorted image of the world situation, for it omits from view the other part of the picture. The Soviet bloc faces economic stagnation, and since superiority in economic performance has always been a basic tenet of Soviet doctrine, providing ideological legitimacy to the regime, this is far more than an economic problem for the Soviet system.

Communism as a powerful idea has ceased to exist either within the Soviet Union or outside it. The Soviet bloc has not produced any new political or social or cultural ideas for many years; the system seems to inhibit them. Russian nationalism has been and will increasingly be invoked to fill the vacuum, but this is a double-edged sword: national problems within the Soviet Union, and between the Soviet Union and its involuntary allies, are likely to be stirred up thereby. As recent events in Poland have shown, there will be a great deal of pressure within the Soviet empire; whether it will have the effect of forcing changes in the system, or whether it will be directed to the outside world, largely depends on how easy it will appear to those in power to expand the Soviet sphere of influence. And this in turn largely depends on whether the United States can recover its resolve to resist such expansion through the restoration of a military balance, a reorganization of NATO, and a new and more flexible policy toward the less-developed countries.

Can the United States do all this? Can it, in other words, recover itself sufficiently to develop what amounts to an updated strategy of containment suitable to the conditions of the 1980's?

There is an interesting analogy in the history of France. Early in the 20th century, after more than a decade and a half of self-flagellation, decadence, and a mood of utter despair, France almost overnight was "herself again," to quote the title of a famous book (by Ernest Dinnet, a clergyman), published on the eve of World War I. The change was triggered by certain diplomatic maneuvers of no great intrinsic importance—the provocative visit of Emperor Wilhelm II to Tangiers in 1905 which was seen as a national capitulation, as showing how little France counted in the world, and how easily it could be pushed around. Tangiers was a turning-point. The professional politicians were among the last to realize it; the poet Charles Péguy was one of the first.

Teheran and Kabul seem to have had a similar effect on the American mood. But the resistance to an American recovery is substantial. The reassertion of national will, as the proponents of ap-

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peasement see it, carries with it the danger of nuclear war, and it is in any case, they tell us, impossible to reestablish American hegemony all over the world. What is one to say to this that has not been said a thousand times before? That the issue at stake is not hegemony but survival? That a "Pax Americana" never existed outside the imagination of a few writers on foreign affairs?

Why should there be so much opposition to an American recovery on the global scene? There are various reasons—genuine confusion about the state of the world, a result of the trauma of the late 1960's and the early 1970's; genuine inability to understand that politics is about power. Some have written and talked for so long about America's impotence and inevitable decline that they have acquired almost a vested interest in the realization of their nightmare; some are deeply convinced that the country is so irresponsible in the exercise of its power that it has to be kept in a state of weakness; some think that to go under in style is preferable to an outcome more positive but aesthetically less pleasing (as the old Renan told the young Deroulède: "*Jeune homme, la France se meurt, ne troublez pas son agonie. . .*").

An inordinate amount of time and effort will have to be invested in fighting battles on two fronts, against hostility abroad and confusion at home. Of the two, the domestic struggle may well be the more protracted. Spokesmen for yesterday's discredited orthodoxy are still strongly represented in government, the media, the academic world; they are quoted in the press, they are listened to with great respect. They may recently have become a little more cautious in their pronouncements, but they still think that the immediate crisis, most probably the result of regrettable misunderstandings, will blow over soon, and it will then appear that they were right after all to resist the "hysteria" of the "alarmists."

To such people, the greatest calamity has been the failure of Western leaders to understand the vulnerabilities the Russians feel, their basic insecurity. Thus, the main task facing American leaders is to refrain from anything that will reinforce Soviet paranoia. At one and the same time these gurus tell us that the Russians are not ten feet tall and that they are even taller, having both a military advantage and also the capacity and discipline to maintain it, as compared with the alleged unwillingness of the American people to make the necessary sacrifices. (There is a truly amazing lack of belief here in the intelligence of the average American.) Instead of trying to pursue a hopeless struggle, we are advised to make "conciliatory gestures," and presumably also we should help the Russians to solve their problems of "ghastly" shortages of food and consumer goods and declining oil production.

This approach has been tried for ten years, and the result has been growing pressure on Europe, the invasion of Africa and South Yemen by Cuban troops, and of Afghanistan by Soviet ones, the massive Soviet military build-up, and the deployment of new missiles. Yet those who prescribed such a policy still refuse to admit that they were wrong, grievously wrong, and for a long time.

Since a realistic and effective policy cannot be insured today without an analysis of what went wrong in the past and why, it may well be that the battle against America's decline in the world will be won or lost not in foreign parts, but in committee rooms, conference halls, and editorial offices in Washington and New York.

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The Jewish Argument with God

Abraham Kaplan

FOR some time it has been the fashion in liberal theology to emphasize the sameness of the basic teachings of the major religions. The qualifiers may make the claim tautologous: deviant teachings might be dismissed as not basic or the religion as not a major one. Differences are also important; the essence of soup is only water.

The polar view, that the true faith is unique, is equally groundless if the claim is extended to every element of the faith. It is hard to find any belief or practice in any religion which does not have its counterpart in some other religion. The elements of any religion taken singly are not distinctive, only the entire set in just the combination and with just the emphasis that the religion in question gives them.

Among Jewish teachings is one which *is*, however, virtually unique among world religions. It is not a tenet accepted by all Jews past and present, or even by all the members of any identifiable movement within Judaism. It is, rather, a recognizable stream of Jewish thought; it is not confined to any period or school but is to be found in biblical, talmudic, kabbalistic, hasidic, and modern sources.

I

ROBERT BROWNING's poem "The Glove" tells of a lady who, to test her lover, threw her glove into the pit where a lion was being exhibited. The knight promptly jumped in after the glove, and having retrieved it, flung it in his lady's face, leaving her remorsefully aware what a true lover she had lost.

According to Jewish tradition this episode is recurrently reenacted in the relations between God and man, with significant variations on the theme. God tested Abraham, says Scripture explictly and abruptly, by commanding the sacrifice of Isaac. After Abraham demonstrated willingness to slay his son, God concludes, "Now I know that you are a God-fearing man," as though Abraham's faithfulness were previously in doubt. The faithfulness of Job is similarly tested: "Have you considered my servant Job. . . ?" God asks Satan; "All that he has is in your power. . . ."

The tribulations of Israel, from the time of Moses to the present, are repeatedly seen as a test of faith. In a testament written during the last hours of the Warsaw Ghetto, Yossel Rackover says: "I believe in You, God of Israel, even though You have done everything to stop me from believing in You. . . . I should like to say something more: do not put the rope under too much strain, lest, alas, it may snap. The test to which You have put us is so severe, so unbearably severe. . . ."

Because the test is so severe, "You should—You must—forgive those members of Your people who, in their misery, have turned from You." The Jew does not hesitate to give advice, even to the deity. In pointing out to God His moral duty and exhorting Him to virtue, Rackover is following the precedent set by Abraham: "I have taken it upon myself to speak to God. . . . Shall not the Judge of all the earth do justly?" Levi Isaac of Berdichev is noted for his readiness to negotiate with God: "If Your time has not yet come to redeem Your people Israel, at least redeem the *goyim*!"

Advising and exhorting God is extraordinary enough. The Jew has gone further, accusing God of injustice. According to the Midrash, Moses, denied entry to the Promised Land, reproaches God: "Why do You act thus toward me? It was You who first approached me. . . . Having made me great, will You now degrade me?" God replies, "I have sworn it." Moses says: "Master of the Universe, did You not break Your own oath when You wanted to?" The Psalmist is equally outspoken: "Surely in vain have I cleansed my heart and washed my hands in innocence, for the whole day I have been plagued, and chastised every morning." "You sell Your people for a small price," he charges. In a memorable hasidic anecdote, a congregant declares on Yom Kippur; "True, I have sinned; but what about You, O God? What about the suffering of innocents, unjust persecutions, the triumph of evil? Let's call it quits—You forgive me, O God, and I will forgive You!" To which Levi Isaac is said to have responded, "No, no! You let Him off too easy!"

At the very least, God is charged with indifference: if He Himself does not act unjustly, at any rate He *allows* injustice to flourish. "Why do You stand far off, O God?" asks the Psalmist. "Why do You hide Yourself in times of trouble?" "My God,

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my God, why have You forsaken me, and are far from my help at my cry? O my God, I call by day but You do not answer, at night and there is no rest for me." The prophet Habakkuk voices the same complaint: "How long shall I cry for help, and You will not hear? . . . Why are You silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?"

The idea that God has something to answer *for*, not only a prayer to respond *to*, is more than an aberration of the Jewish religious spirit, though it is scarcely known in other theisms.

The demand for an acceptable answer is most notably the theme of the book of Job. "I desire to reason with God," Job says outright. God acknowledges at the outset the injustice of His treatment of Job, saying to Satan: "He still holds fast his integrity, though you moved me to destroy him without cause." Such an admission is so extraordinary that the Talmud comments: "Were it not expressly stated in Scripture, we would not dare to say it."

The teaching is not unequivocal: Job was also condemned for his presumptuousness. Said one of the talmudic sages: "Job sought to turn the dish upside down"; and another: "Dust should be put in the mouth of Job, because he makes himself an equal of Heaven; is there a servant who argues with his master?" In the case of Jewish servants, the answer, plainly, is yes. In another context, the Talmud is explicit in prohibiting such complaints: "If a man says that the Holy One, blessed be He, is lax in the execution of justice, his life shall be outlawed." Yet the tradition is deeply rooted. Though the outcome of the complaint must not be prejudged, God Himself invites the argument: "Come now and let us reason together," He says to Isaiah. The logic of the argument as well as its premises call for examination.

II

IN BRINGING God's actions before the bar of reason, as Immanuel Kant might have said, the Jew is expressing a Kantian moral autonomy. Though the moral law derives from God, it governs action only as it accords with man's own moral sense. The dictates of conscience take priority over a divine imperative construed by human authority. Job says to his "comforters": "Far be it from me that I should justify you [and admit that I deserve my fate]; till I die I will not put away my integrity from me." Justice will be served only if integrity is maintained: "This will even be my salvation, that a hypocrite shall not come before Him." The false confession made in the hope of more lenient treatment is an act of moral cowardice on the part of the victim, and does not cancel out the injustice of what is being done to him.

Without moral autonomy Judaism could not have survived. From Abraham to Joshua, and from Bar Kochba to Ben-Gurion, Jews have faced crushingly superior power, surviving only as a nonconformist minority. It is not wholly accidental that the Jews have produced such revolutionary thinkers as Marx, Einstein, and Freud. Jewish culture since biblical times has fostered the readiness to go one's own way regardless of social pressures to conform.

King, priest, and prophet saw the Hebrews as an obstinate and stubborn people. God described them as "stiff-necked"; in pleading for them, Moses himself reveals the same trait. "God said to Moses: 'I have seen this people, and behold it is a stiff-necked people. Now let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them. . . .' And Moses besought the Lord his God and said, 'Lord, why does Your wrath wax hot against Your people? . . . Why should the Egyptians say He brought them forth only to slay them in the mountains . . .?'" Moses refuses to acquiesce in silence, even in the face of God's explicit reproach, as though he knows God's will better than it is conveyed in God's own words.

After the sin of the Golden Calf, Moses still does not let God alone, ending his plea for forgiveness of the people with the declaration, " . . . if not, blot my name out of Your book. . . ." In the literal sense, no doubt the Book of Life is intended; the context suggests another latent meaning: if You repudiate Your people, I, for my part, will stand with them, and repudiate in turn the mission You have charged me to carry out.

The argument with God must be viewed against the background of the development of the religious consciousness. A central strand in this development is the movement from a cosmological deity to an ethical deity. The Creator, Ruler, Lord of Hosts is the locus of power; the Heavenly Father, Providence, the God of revelation and prophecy is the locus of goodness. The one invites fear, the other love; with the first it is possible to enter into a contract specifying a *quid pro quo*, while the second establishes a covenant, in which giving is unconditional and without limit.

Judaism begins with the moralization of the cosmological god. The story of the Flood is anticipated in the epic of Gilgamesh. There, however, both the destruction of the world and the saving of Gilgamesh are acts of arbitrary displeasure and favor. In contrast, Noah's Flood came about because "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth," while "Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation." The cosmological and the ethical are united in God's holiness, which combines power and virtue, justice and mercy.

Morality, abstracted from the divine, constitutes the Torah, and as such is endowed with independent existence. The moral law has a primacy paralleled by the Greek Fate to which even the gods were subject. When Satan accused God's people of turning away from Him, God replied; "Let them forget Me altogether, if only they live by My Torah!" Buddha similarly reassured his disciples:

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"What I have taught will be your teacher after my departure; if you adhere to the teaching and discipline, is it not the same as if I remained with you forever?" Morality makes God ever-present to man. Morality is the link between man and God, having its seat in what is divine in man, and being intrinsic to divinity itself.

In the argument with God, Judaism is invoking God against Himself, justice against power, the ethical deity against the cosmological deity. The conflict within man between his divine and animal natures is projected onto the deity. God can be an advocate against Himself. According to the Talmud, He even engages in prayer: "May it be My will that My mercy may overcome My anger . . . so that I may deal with My children in kindness." The words of the hasidic folk song are both profound and innocent: *"Gott zoll Dir helfen, Gottenyu!"* ("God help You, dear God!"). It is He Who helps, and He Who is in need of help.

Submissiveness is appropriate to the cosmological god; the ethical God invites not submission, but service in a labor of love. While fear generates humility, love engenders pride. Neither modesty nor vanity is in question; these reflect what is seen in the eyes of others, not how we see ourselves in relation to the transcendent otherness of the divine. Only God is worthy of devotion or submission, not images or other human beings.

The Jew's awe of God is counterbalanced by self-respect. Abasement of the self denigrates the only thing man has to offer God—himself. Asked for the significance of the ritual bow, the Baal Shem Tov replied: "I do not know—only, we go down and down and down, and then we bow. But," he added, "if we bow too low too often, we forget how to lift our heads to Heaven."

Man is worthy of respect because he was created in the image of God. This doctrine has been singled out as the most important in the whole Torah. Says a Midrash: "Wherever you see the footprint of man, God stands before you. Whenever man walks abroad, he is preceded by a company of angels calling out, 'Make way for the image of God!' " Philo of Alexandria and Maimonides saw the image of the divine in man's rational nature. Scripture points instead to a resemblance in the capacity for moral discrimination: "Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil. . . ." It is this knowledge on which man rests his claims against the deity, calling on God's own moral nature as a witness for the plaintiff.

The cosmological deity is assigned an ancillary role. The world was created in fulfillment of divine purpose; this purpose can be specified only in ethical terms. Because man is the only moral agent in the whole of creation, he is central to the purpose of creation. God has plenty of angels, said Mendel of Kotsk, but few good men. An angel has a thousand mouths, each with a thousand tongues, and all sing the praises of God; but he has not one pocket with coins in it for the poor.

Man is, in the words of Saadya Gaon, "the axle of the world and its foundation." God usually identifies Himself to His people, not as the Creator of heaven and earth, but as the One Who brought them forth from slavery in Egypt. The identification is made in this way, explains the hasidic master known as the Yehudi, so that no man might suppose that God is too preoccupied with cosmic concerns to bother about him. God unquestionably cares about man, the Jew argues; it is in His own interest.

III

THERE is thus a stream of Jewish thought which holds that God needs man. It is not an easy doctrine to maintain. "Can a man be profitable to God?" Eliphaz asks of Job. "Is it any advantage to the Almighty that you are righteous?" Elihu echoes: "If you are righteous, what do you give Him? Or what does He receive from your hand?" For Spinoza, the notion that God lacks anything at all is self-contradictory, since God, by definition, contains all within Himself.

Yet man's obedience to God's command, his fulfillment of God's will, is not assured a priori: "Everything is in the hands of Heaven save the fear of Heaven." Judaism maintains that, insofar as the language of human feeling and action can apply to God at all, God is angered by iniquity, pacified by repentance, and moved by prayer. In a word, man's doings matter to Him. Both Ibn Ezra and Nachmanides note the anthropomorphism in the Scriptural statement that in the days of Noah God regretted having created man, but His saving of Noah, His subsequent covenant with Abraham, and the final injunctions of Moses to the people are all unmistakable expressions of a divine purpose which man is to fulfill.

The fulfillment of this purpose is a blessing for man. It is more: it also has a cosmic significance. In acting morally man shares with God a creative role. Like God Himself, the moral man creates what God can look at and pronounce to be good. The Talmud says: "A judge who, even for one hour, passes judgment with complete fairness, is credited by Scripture as if he had become a partner of God in the creation of the world."

"As if" he were a partner: man's creative power is not in its own nature human; it is an endowment of the divine. The power lies in man's soul, the seat of moral sense. In kabbalistic doctrine, the soul is an emanation from God. Moral action, bodying forth the soul, brings to bear divine power. The man of faith, by his every deed, says with David confronting Goliath: "You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of God. . . . This day God will deliver you into my hand." By man's actions, spirit triumphs over matter. The force is God's, but it accomplishes its effect through human mediation.

Here lies man's cosmic duty and—since "ought"

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implies "can"—the cosmic power with which the duty can be fulfilled. "Where you stand," said Moses Cordovero, "there stand all the worlds." When man acts in the name of God he calls whole worlds into existence, just as, by withdrawing the divine power to which they owe their being, when he sins he destroys whole worlds. In the union of the ethical deity and the cosmological deity morality becomes ontology.

Faith expressed in action brings about the union. This is the basis of the hasidic doctrine, emphasized by Jacob Joseph of Polonnoye, that the righteous man plays a cosmic role—his performance of the *mitzvot* is an indispensable step in the process by which the divine scheme of things is maintained. "Why was man created?" asks Mendel of Kotsk. "To perfect his soul? No. To lift up the heavens!"

The cosmic process is intimately interwoven with the fate of the whole people of Israel. There is a Divine Exile parallel to the exile of the people. "Come and see how beloved are Israel in the sight of God," says Simeon bar Yochai, "in that to every place to which they were exiled, the *Shekhinah* [the Divine Presence] went with them."

True, the *Shekhinah* is to be found everywhere. In the dawn of the Hebrew religious consciousness God was a regional deity; primitive religions commonly assign to each deity a local habitation. Israeli humor explains why the Western Wall is a particularly suitable place for prayer: "From here, it's only a local call." The God of the ancient Hebrews was detached from His place only in order to accompany His people on their wanderings. With the universalization of the national God, omnipresence became a recognized attribute of the divine.

Just as the exile of the people has a spiritual sense rather than a merely geographical dimension, so also with the Divine Exile. The *Shekhinah* "left Her home" in order to accompany the people, says the Kabbalah (in kabbalistic literature, the *Shekhinah* represents the feminine aspect of the Godhead). This occurred when the Sanctuary was destroyed and the Temple was burned. In Her own place, the *Shekhinah* is united with the *En Sof*, the Infinite Source of the emanations which make up the divine. As the people turn away from the spiritual component in their make-up, there is a corresponding dissociation within divinity. God never abandons His people; the way back is always open—*tshuvah*, repentance, means the return. When the lost and wandering people find their way again, something of the divine returns with them.

In the teaching of Isaac Luria the process is generalized to provide a cosmogony. God contracts into Himself; what remains when God has withdrawn is the material universe. Something of the divine must still be present, not merely as sign—"the heavens declare the glory of God"—but also as substance, the ontological basis of all being. The metaphysics is like Vedanta: the world is *maya*, not wholly real, but not altogether illusory. It is Brahman, the divine beyond attributes, seen through the eyes of metaphysical ignorance. The conquest of ignorance—Judaism would say, of evil—restores divine unity, reveals God as always and forever One.

Hindus worship Brahma the Creator, Siva the Destroyer, or Vishnu the Preserver—all male deities, with female consorts; Brahman, the transcendent Reality, is neuter. Judaism personifies not only the female *Shekhinah* but also the *En Sof* from whom She has been separated. God suffers from Her departure as does a lover separated from his beloved. Philo of Alexandria, noting that God is one and alone, says that "solitude is precious to Him." Yet God longs for His people to return to him: "How sad for God," exclaimed the Hasid, Uri of Strelsk, when he was a child, "not to have His children near Him!" In kabbalistic teaching, how much more does He long to be reunited with the *Shekhinah*.

A WORK of redemption is to be done. In human perspective, evil is to be overcome, transformed into good. In cosmic terms, the task has another meaning. It is to restore God's unity with Himself. According to Lurianic Kabbalah, what is attained is the union of the Creator with His creation. In the process of creation, the vessels into which the divine emanations have been poured are shattered; sparks of the divine fire are hurled into the void. The cooling embers in which they are embedded make up material existence. All matter encases a fragment of spirit; in every sin is a core of holiness. The shells are to be broken, the inner spirit released. The sparks, by their own nature, will then fly upward, to be reabsorbed in the light whence they came.

The work of redemption is to be accomplished by the people of Israel as a people. The covenant with Abraham becomes a covenant with all the children of Israel: "I will take you for My people, and I will be your God." God's purpose is fulfilled when He becomes the God of Israel as He had been the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. The spiritual leader points the way. Isaac Luria identified the Sabbath, personified as a bride, with the *Shekhinah*; on the eve of the Sabbath, therefore, he customarily took a walk, so as to share the Divine Exile. In turn, the *Shekhinah*, present at the Sabbath table, shares in the link with the divine constituted by the Sabbath ritual.

The Kabbalah expounds a parallelism between the Upper World and the Lower World. Whatever is done in the one sphere is reflected by corresponding events in the other. The doctrine is a kind of shadow mysticism, akin to what is conveyed by Plato's myth of the cave. The uninstructed see only the shadows in the Lower World of the true substances in the Upper World. Unlike Plato's metaphysics; however, the Kabbalah holds that the dependence between the two worlds is reciprocal. The Lower World, rather than being

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only a shadow of the Upper World, symbolizes it; like other symbols, it evokes the reality it names.

Events on the plane of human action are necessary and sufficient for corresponding events to take place on the plane of the divine. "From an activity below there is stimulated a corresponding activity on high," says the Zohar. "If there is no impulse from below, there is no stirring above." Jews pray, "May He Who makes peace in His high places make peace for us and for all Israel." The Kabbalah also reverses the process: "Whoever establishes peace on earth is accounted as though he had made it on high."

Herein lies the significance of the *mitzvot,* especially those of distinctively religious rather than ethical content. The performance of the *mitzvot* is meritorious not merely as unquestioning fulfillment of God's command. It is even more meritorious because of its effect in the Upper World. Action carried out for our own benefit may be prudent but it is not virtuous. Virtue lies in what is done for the sake of Heaven, purely as a service to the divine. God's command is not a Kantian imperative to do our duty for no other reason than that it *is* our duty. It has another reason, but a spiritual rather than a utilitarian one. The reason is found in Jewish liturgy as late as the 19th century, in the formula, "For the sake of the reunion of God and His *Shekhinah.*" To bring about this reunion, customs, like many of those instituted by Luria and later hasidic masters, may be as efficacious as the canonical precepts.

When the doctrine is carried to its logical extreme, it leads to the paradoxical conclusion that it is man who creates God. This is not the absurdity that God's existence depends on man; but His being the God of worship does depend on there being worshippers. "God" is a relational term, like "wife"; a woman can exist whether or not there are men, but she could not be a wife if there were no man to marry her. (In "Lord," "Father," "King," the relational element is explicit.)

"If My people decline to proclaim Me as King upon earth," God says, "My kingdom ceases also in Heaven." God Himself is everlasting, but His kingship, by the principle of parallelism, comes to an end when man refuses to acknowledge Him. Similarly, God is without beginning, but He cannot be the God of Israel before there is a people of Israel. In the Jerusalem Talmud, "I have brought you forth from Egypt" by a change of vowels is transformed into, "I was brought forth with you from Egypt." One and the same event makes Israel a nation and God a God.

IV

MAN is worthy of faith for he, too, is a locus of moral worth and cosmological power. Morality provides the end; power provides the means for its attainment. The end is nothing less than bringing the Messiah, ushering in the age of cosmic redemption.

The so-called "practical" Kabbalah, in contrast to the speculative (like Hatha Yoga in contrast to Raja Yoga), consisted in the recitation of certain texts and the performance of certain rites—for instance, carrying out particular *mitzvot* at precisely specified times and in particular holy places so as to hasten the messianic era. Even the wordless melody sung by the *rebbe* and his Hasidim might serve this end. "The whole world is a melody," said Pinchas of Koretz; "if I were a musician I could force You to come."

Here religion touches upon magic: God's own power is invoked to compel Him—man redeems the Redeemer from Himself. The conception rises above magic when it makes central the element of faith which relates God and man to each other. Man can accomplish nothing save by his devotion to God, or all his doings are empty. In turn, God's purposes remain unfulfilled save by His caring for His people, or His work of creation is a pointless exercise in omnipotence. Faith links God and man in a closed circle with neither beginning nor end.

This linkage Martin Buber called dialogue, in contrast to alternating monologues of revelation and prayer. Man expresses his faith in God by responding "Here I am!" to God's call. God expresses His faith in man by offering him the Torah, though it has so often been rejected, and knowing well how demanding is the life of the spirit. God's faith is shown by His calling us even when we do not hear. God might well ask in the words of the Psalmist, "Why do you stand far off, O man? My people, why have you forsaken Me?"

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," and God loves His people; the love affair is as tempestuous as it is passionate. The relationship between God and Israel is a history of faithlessness and jealousy, anger and despair, forgiveness and reconciliation, ecstasy and rededication. The Jew, in a word, is *intimate* with his God. Truly, "what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as our God is to us, whenever we call upon Him?"

To be near to Him when we call, we must identify who it is that is calling; we must identify ourselves—that is, give ourselves an identity. Only then does He have an identity. Each becomes who he is in the encounter. The Jew does not worship the god who is not yet, but his God is always in the making.

Heinrich Heine, on his death-bed, was asked whether he thought God would forgive him. "Of course God will forgive me," he replied, "from this He makes a living." There is more irony than impiety in the remark. In Jewish perspective, it is hard even for God to make a living. The Jew can see the evil in the world as the sanctions being imposed in the demand for a living wage; as usual with such sanctions, both sides suffer. But as between God and man, who is the employer and who is the employed is, for the Jew, also subject to negotiation.

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The Three Mile Shadow

Roger Starr

As THE United States debates its energy future—with a new strategic option emerging almost monthly, now biomass, now a vastly increased burning of coal, now the production of synthetic fuels, now nearly painless cutbacks in the amount of energy consumed per capita, now windmills—a shadow hangs over the one tried and functioning substitute for oil and coal: atomic energy. It is, of course, the shadow cast by Three Mile Island.

To opponents of atomic energy, the Three Mile Island accident proved that the genie in the reactor vessel is alive, and banging his knees against the eight-inch steel walls that seem to imprison him. He almost got loose on Three Mile Island. Luck, simply and alone, according to Richard E. Webb, Ph.D.,* prevented a major disaster, releasing radiation on a scale that, Dr. Webb says, could "ruin" agriculture in a territory half as large as the United States east of the Mississippi River and cause at least one million human cancers. Most nuclear scientists dismiss this figure as absurd, but even a less excitable and specialized opponent of nuclear power—like Russell Peterson, president of the Audubon Society and one of the members of the presidential commission that investigated and reported on the accident—has written that his experience on the commission confirmed his view that atomic energy could never be sufficiently well controlled to make it a safe option for the nation's energy future.†

On the other side of the argument stand those to whom Three Mile Island proved that the design factors built into a modern nuclear-powered generating station are more conservative and more effective than they were thought to be, and that nuclear power, as tested by the accident, is less prone to the risk of disaster than had been feared. The problem they see is that so few people are prepared to believe them.

The President of the United States reacted to the Three Mile Island accident in the time-honored tradition of Presidents reacting to unexpected and deeply troubling events that impinge on national policy. He appointed a commission, in this instance composed of twelve Americans picked to reflect major interest groups in the general population, and chose John G. Kemeny, President of Dartmouth College, for its chairman.

The commission's frame of reference was the Three Mile Island accident, how it happened, and which of the agencies involved bore responsibility for which parts, if any, of the accident. After examining these facts, the commission was directed to report findings and make recommendations for improvements.

The Kemeny commission did its work in six-and-a-half months, releasing its findings on October 30, 1979. Its report was based on public hearings, depositions, interviews, and staff research. Staff reports on what the commission described as "most important information" followed the commission's own report, while the documents collected and transcripts of interviews and testimony were said by the commission to fill a library shelf 300 feet long.

As the Kemeny report preface states, the commission was careful to limit its recommendations to items directly related to the Three Mile Island accident. It did not consider itself competent to discuss or analyze the role of nuclear power in the nation's energy program. It was not asked to examine the military use of atomic energy, or the disposal of atomic waste, or the proliferation of atomic energy. Its findings cover 33 pages; its recommendations, 18.

In general, it found that the Three Mile Island accident was caused by small malfunctions of equipment to which the operators of the plant responded improperly. What should have been a minor matter, scarcely worthy of comment, and surely beneath the level of public attention, became instead a major problem that at the very least caused severe psychic stress to the public and may ultimately cost more than a billion dollars in cleanup and repair expenses, and to replace the lost nuclear-generated electricity with power from other sources.

The commission, however, did not stop with criticism of the operators' actions. It also criticized

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* *Nuclear Lessons*, ed. by Richard Curtis and Elizabeth Hogan, Stackpole Books, 284 pp., $16.95.

† In a letter to the New York *Times*, March 17, 1980.

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their training, which it said contributed to their mistakes; the design and layout of the control room of the plant; what it described as the inattentiveness of utility company management to safety as a primary problem; and the suppliers of the plant equipment, including Babcock and Wilcox.

Primary blame for the conditions exposed by Three Mile Island was placed by the Kemeny commission on inadequacies in the regulatory process, and it demanded that the process be stiffened and toughened. At the same time, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), the federal agency charged with licensing and supervising all U.S. atomic-energy plants, hired a New York law firm, Rogovin, Stern, and Huge, to conduct its own inquiry and make its own report on Three Mile Island. While it is much easier to read, the Rogovin report does not greatly differ from the Kemeny report. Both agree that the five-member NRC should be replaced by an agency headed by a single administrator reporting directly to the President. Like the Kemeny report, the Rogovin report urges the NRC (or its successor agency) to pay less attention to licensing and more to detailed supervision of nuclear-plant operations.

A two-sentence summary of the difference between the two reports might read as follows: the Kemeny report thinks that the atomic-energy industry can function with the degree of safety the public should expect only if the NRC does a much more detailed, all-embracing, and tougher job of regulation. The Rogovin report asks how the NRC can be expected to do a better job after Congress established it in such half-baked fashion.

Despite many cogent observations and specific attention to details of operations that must be improved, however, both reports neglect the basic industrial context into which the nation is putting these new technological developments. And both reports tend to underemphasize the political atmosphere that has gathered around nuclear energy and that no one in high office has been sufficiently daring to deal with.

II

THE main point about Three Mile Island that everyone seems to forget is that it is an electric-generating plant. Its purpose is not to split atoms or create a chain reaction in uranium; its purpose is to produce electric power in a form that can be transmitted economically to users who may be hundreds of miles away from the plant and who tap their power from a vast interstate grid.

Like most other large electric plants, Three Mile Island produces steam to drive turbines connected to large electric generators. The major difference between an oil- or coal-fired plant and a nuclear-power plant is that while the two older types of plants make steam from water by using the heat produced by the burning of flammables, the nuclear plant makes steam from water by heating it with the energy released by the continuing controlled fission of uranium nuclei.

Nuclear-power generation cannot be understood until one recognizes that much of its equipment is exactly the kind of equipment found in a coal- or oil-fired station. Pipes carrying hot water or steam at very high pressures are common to both systems; so are many of the pumps, valves, and other fittings; and so is much of the instrumentation that brings information concerning temperatures, pressures, and chemical constituencies to the control room where the plant's small crew of operators is stationed.

The Three Mile Island trouble did not start in the atomic-heating part of the plant. It started in the conventional steam-making, turbine-driving section of the plant when pumps used to propel water from the condenser to the steam generator stopped functioning. (The reasons are not crucial to Three Mile Island—they could have occurred in any electric-generating station.)

When the pumps stopped, valves automatically closed, as they were designed to do. Immediately, also as designed, the reactor itself was automatically shut down. The chain reaction stopped exactly as it was intended to do. A safety valve automatically opened—again as designed—and pumps soon began automatically to provide new, cooling water to the circuit.

Then came the act that caused the accident: the operators turned the pumps off. They had reason to believe that the relief valve had closed and that there was plenty of water in the primary circuit to cool the core of the reactor. They were wrong. So were some of the instruments.

III

THIS narrative, which omits many events that were significant but not intrinsically connected with the basic accident, emphasizes a single point, obvious in the retelling but still apparently obscure to many Americans, including those who formulate public policy. The accident did not originate in the nuclear part of the process. The accident was caused by the failure of part of the steam circuit common to almost every generating station that uses superheated steam, and by the failure of that most banal piece of equipment, a safety or relief valve. It opened when it should have but failed to close when it should have. This malfunction threatened the core cooling system by letting water escape from it. The consequent mistake by the operators who shut off the automatic water replacement brought about the critical overheating of the core, and the melting of the fuel. Although the accident ultimately involved the reactor vessel and the nuclear fuel, it would not have occurred but for the malfunction and shutdown of the plant's steam turn-on generating system.

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It is quite easy to imagine exotic accidents arising not from the failure of the piping and pumping systems, but from the nuclear end of the operation. Thus Richard Webb has suggested that there is a mathematical possibility of a runaway chain reactor. Others disagree with his mathematics. In any case, there has never been such an episode, here or abroad, in any of the commercial or military reactors that have been in operation for years.

In an article in *Scientific American*, Harold Lewis, professor of physics at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and chairman of the Risk Assessment Review Group established by the NRC to review its own safety study (known to many as the Rasmussen report), speaks of friends who ask him to describe the worst thing that could have happened at Three Mile Island. His response:

> The worst that could have happened is that a series of other misadventures could have befallen the reactor—a massive electrical failure, an earthquake, a fire, or the like—leading to a core melt. The molten core could then have interacted with the water in the pressure vessel or in the containment building, leading to a steam explosion that could have torn off the roof of the containment building. Then all the radioactivity could have gone into the atmosphere at the very moment a tornado came by to pick it up and proceeded to wander through the Northeast, dropping just the right amount on each city to annihilate its inhabitants. Indeed this could have happened.

Professor Lewis reports that his friends are angered by the conjecture because they recognize that the occurrence of such a combination of events is unlikely and far-fetched They have, he says, asked the wrong question. The question they should ask is: how likely is the worst thing that could happen, and what are the probabilities? Every day people make judgments that are explicitly or implicitly based on assumptions of probability, and doomsday scenarios like Professor Lewis's concatenation of wind, explosion, earthquake can be composed on any subject.

Thus the worst thing that could happen to a high-risk office building is that a leak of water somewhere near the corner of an upper floor could find flaws in the concrete covering several of the structural columns, that these particular columns could have been carelessly painted, that they could be attacked by rust that would reduce their bearing strength, that a heavy computer could be installed in the corner office over the weakened columns, that a hurricane would apply eccentric wind loads, that the columns would shear, that the upper part of the building would collapse, hitting the buildings across the street, etc., etc. Indeed these things could happen, and some have, particularly in the early days of structural steel (just as some new technologies for wide-span roofs over auditoriums in several American cities have clearly been flawed in one way or another). But no one would restrain high-rise office building construction today because of such imaginative scenarios of disaster.

IV

Since there have been few actual cases, the realistic possibilities of an accident in a nuclear-generating station affecting human life are perhaps best analyzed not by studying the details of what happened at Three Mile Island but by looking at the causes of technological accident in general.

The first and most important of these causes is a fundamentally flawed technology; and the first and most important thing to say about such a technology is that it usually reveals itself soon and in unmistakable terms. There is, for example, the case of the rigid-frame dirigible, regarded in the 1920's as a promising technology for long-range air travel. The United States Navy ordered four dirigibles, of which three were destroyed within a very short time. The Navy then prudently decided that the dirigible was flawed and got out of the business.

Another, more recent, instance of flawed technology appeared in the case of the British Comet, the first commercial passenger jet airplane. In striving for lightness, the designers did not adequately reinforce the shell. Three of the planes exploded in mid-air because they were unable to tolerate the difference between the internal air pressure and the low atmospheric pressure at high altitudes. It took only a few years of flying to reveal the flaw which—in contrast to the dirigible's weakness—was then corrected.

After more than twenty years of commercial nuclear-reactor operation, Three Mile Island gives no evidence that the use of uranium oxide to heat water to make steam to generate electricity is a flawed technological process. In fact, the heating end of the electric-generating process is considerably simpler than the same process in a fossil-fueled plant, particularly a coal-fired plant. The equipment for handling immense tonnages of coal and for pulverizing it for complete combustion; the process of extracting particulate matter and sulfur compounds from the smoke stacks, and of removing ashes and slag from the furnace pits—all these are unnecessary. Except for the apparatus that drops control rods into place when it is desired to cut off the fission chain, there are no moving parts in the reactor. The quenching system—the emergency core cooling system—is operated by gravity, by pumps with an independent course of power, and by duplicate systems of pipes. No part of these systems is "exotic"; they represent the same kinds of apparatus found in ordinary power plants.

Of course, the critics of atomic power can point to the price of a malfunction of the core cooling

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systems—a price that cannot be precisely described because it has never had to be paid—as requiring a wholly different standard of safety from that imposed by other power systems. And of course they are right. But that is precisely the type of protection provided by the reactor vessel, the containment building, the air-filtering system, the waste gas collectors, and the emergency core cooling systems.

In technologies like medicine and agriculture, in which a key element is the interaction between biology and invention, flaws can be much slower to reveal themselves. This fact argues strongly for caution in the appraisal of the health effects of radioactivity. Yet radioactivity is not produced by nuclear-generating stations alone. It is a common experience of all life on the planet, and its effects have been studied and its dangers quantified by many students. While some, like Professor Ernest Sternglass of Pittsburgh and Dr. Helen Caldicott of Boston, continue to believe it is so critical that any unnecessary exposure is too dangerous to justify, theirs is a minority position in the field.

In any case, it is agreed by all official health bodies that the Three Mile Island accident did not involve releases of significantly increased radioactivity to the environment. Even the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), an organization generally skeptical of the benefits of nuclear power and sensitive to what it considers its dangers, found that the venting of slightly radioactive krypton in the course of the plant clean-up would pose no physical health problem to the neighboring population. The UCS recommended an elaborate procedure of using a balloon for releasing the gas far above ground. That, they said, was scientifically unnecessary, but they hoped it would lighten the psychological burden of fear.

A SECOND major cause of technological accidents is the appearance of weather or other natural phenomena that diminishes the designed factor to a level that overstrains operator capability. The line between flawed technology and operator overstress may sometimes be hard to draw in the abstract, but it becomes apparent in cases like the Fastnet yachting race of 1979, in which all the sailing vessels were subjected to immense and unusual stresses; some survived, others did not.

With regard to this cause, the basic design of the nuclear-generating stations certainly guards against any predictable meteorological disturbance. Protection against the risk of earthquake is implicit in the whole licensing process. On the evidence, this does not seem a significant factor in nuclear-generating station accidents.

A third major cause of technological accidents is gross incompetence on the part of the operators, such as drunkenness, egregious stupidity, lack of discipline, psychological incapacity for the operating responsibility. Examples of such accidents are the Johnstown flood of 1889 and the *General Slocum* tragedy.

The Johnstown flood was caused by the collapse of a private dam in the hills above Johnstown, Pennsylvania. The dam's owner, Colonel B. F. Rush, who acquired it from a club to fish in the lake behind it, knew nothing of dam technology, and adamantly refused to cut a spillway despite unusual rain that greatly increased the customary quantity of impounded water. Without the spillway, the dam could not withstand the full weight of water, augmented by a heavy storm on May 31, 1889, and simply collapsed, killing between 3,000 and 7,000 people in the valley below.

The *General Slocum*, an excursion steamer whose captain was wholly unqualified for his job, caught fire on June 15, 1904 while taking several thousand German-American mothers and their children out for a picnic. The crew did not know how to put out the fire. The captain steered the vessel in the wrong direction, so that the wind caused the fire to spread. Over 1,200 people were killed.

The operating crews of nuclear-power plants have shown no such personal shortcomings. To be sure, there have been incidents of difficulty created by improper maintenance procedures. But the incidents did not result in damage or radiation leakage, because the operating crew took proper steps.

Nevertheless the selection of staff to operate nuclear plants remains a not-quite-solved issue. The basic notion of the government when, in the years after World War II, it sought to encourage the use of atomic energy for electricity generation, first as a means of propelling submarines and then for the production of electricity, was to place the responsibility for ownership and operation of electric plants in the hands of the utility industry. There is ample sense in such a position, but even after having established that basic policy, the government found it could not treat the nuclear-powered plant in the same way fossil-fuel plants were treated. Initial costs were too high (and fossil-fuel costs too low) to interest private industry without subsidization. Subsidization also brought government insurance, because the total lack of experience with which to evaluate the risk of a nuclear plant, and the combination of heavy plant cost and great public liability in the event of a truly disastrous occurrence, made nuclear power uninsurable in the normal market. If uninsurable, the plants could not be financed in the private capital market.

Even if these financial issues had not arisen, there would inevitably have been a public demand for intense government scrutiny of atomic power, federal licensing, and federal assumption of safety responsibility. From time to time over the years there have been suggestions that the operation be in government hands. This demand is based on the theory that profit maximization is inconsistent with safety, and it is buttressed by the

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remarkable safety record compiled in the Navy's nuclear fleet. But there are important differences between Navy and civilian operation. The Navy's plants are more compact, and of much lower power ratings than the stationary electric plants. The Navy men are actually moved through the water by the equipment they operate; they are the prime beneficiaries of the power, and they understand that their progress homeward or outward bound depends on the same teamwork that must characterize their shipboard life. They are much closer physically to the supervising officers who, presumably, have mastered the theory as well as the technical layout of the equipment on board ship.

In the wake of Three Mile Island—where the operators employed by its managing owner, Metropolitan Edison, turned what should have been a minor inconvenience into probably the most costly non-fatal accident in history—both the Kemeny and Rogovin reports urged deeper government involvement in operator training and selection. Yet there is no evidence that operators trained directly by the government will be qualitatively different from workers trained by private industry. In fact, many current plant operators received their initial training in the nuclear Navy. There is no shred of evidence that psychological or personal problems played any part whatever in the Three Mile Island accident; though at times confused by the conditions they faced, the operators earned general respect.

It should be added, however, that the responsibilities of nuclear plant operation do impose a peculiar psychological burden—long periods of boredom or concern with repairs not serious enough to warrant plant shutdown alternating, at long irregular intervals, with moments of confused excitement with little or no warning. It goes without saying that not everyone is capable of surviving the boredom and the excitement, not to mention the alternation of the two. But such people do exist and it seems likely that they are the ones who will seek work of this type and survive the competition.

A FOURTH cause of technical accident is communication failure. Ordinarily this brings to mind accidents produced by the collision between two moving vehicles or vessels. One of the worst of all maritime disasters was the explosion of a munitions-carrying freighter in the harbor of Halifax, Nova Scotia, in November 1917. From 1,600 to 3,600 people were killed in the blast, and 8,000 injured, while many homes were destroyed. The accident resulted from a misinterpretation by the pilot of one vessel of the signal sent by the pilot of the *Mont Blanc*, carrying explosives to Europe. Instead of turning away from each other, they turned into each other's paths.

This type of communication problem explains the puzzlement that radar does not eliminate collisions between ships in fog, although they can now see and plot each other's position. The present position provides only a clue to the future position of the ship observed, while communication intended to clarify each navigator's intention remains subject to misunderstanding. Obviously a stationary nuclear plant is not subject to the same kind of error. Nuclear plants do, however, remain peculiarly liable to two other kinds of communication errors. The more crucial in the case of Three Mile Island is the error in communication between the machines and the operators.

In ordinary life, everyone comes into contact with signals that transmit an erroneous message. Every motorist is familiar with the experience of following a car whose rear blinker light appears to be frantically signaling its driver's intention of turning. But the driver may have put the turn indicator on a while ago without making a turn sharp enough to cause it to shut itself off. Its present flashing may be no indication of the state of mind of the driver. It does not take long for the average driver confronted by an anomalous contrast between the signal and the performance of the car to decide that the signal is in error and demands to be ignored. Similarly, when the red-green traffic signals are not working, the line of traffic that is penalized senses when something has gone wrong, and relentlessly moves forward, correctly, having perceived the miscommunication.

It is also possible that two contradictory sets of signals can be transmitted simultaneously. While a car's signal light may be indicating a turn in one direction, the driver or a passenger may be waving an arm to indicate an intention of turning in the other. This ambiguity occurred at Three Mile Island: while one set of signals indicated (falsely) that the cooling system needed no water, other signals were telling the operators (accurately) that the cooling system needed water desperately.

Faced with conflicting messages, a recipient must choose between them on the basis of his experience and expectations. The Three Mile Island operators responded as utility-company personnel, whose attention was fixed on those plant systems that were left in control of the utility company.* The reactor, seen by them as primarily a government responsibility, was signaling its need for water; but the operators gave priority to signals suggesting that more water might lead to less efficient operation of the electrical-generating system.

Such an unfortunate response at a crucial moment may be the natural outcome of two separate authority systems—the government regulatory commission and the utility enterprise. A similar

* "For instance, some procedures emphasized avoiding equipment or component damage over keeping the core covered and cool. . . . Procedures seem to be written to minimize 'outage' and maximize 'plant availability.'" (From the Staff Report of the Technical Assessment Task Force to the Kemeny Commission, Vol. I, page 38.)

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unfortunate response may well occur again in similar situations unless a single authority, founded on a unitary view of the whole process, trains the operators and teaches them how to interpret the messages from the plant.

Thus the failure to receive correctly the communications that the plant was sending to its operators cannot properly be blamed on the innate stupidity of their operators. But it is partly ascribable to the failure to design a control room providing the simplest means possible in which the operators could respond to the plant's language.

Most of the recommendations of the Kemeny and Rogovin commissions have therefore dealt with ways in which the control room can be redesigned, and ways in which the regulatory agency can be reshaped so that the operating utilities will be brought by threat, by closer supervision, by better initial training, by more effective organization of the regulatory agency, and by efforts of the atomic-energy industry itself to avoid the misapprehensions that made Three Mile Island possible.

A second communications problem scarcely involves the plant operators, although they, of course, are the ultimate victims of the failure to solve it. This is the extraordinary lack of communication among different utilities reporting their operating experiences to each other, exchanging information on remedial techniques, on training components they have found necessary, and on nuances in the communication between atomic energy plants and their operators.

The regulatory body, by trying to develop reports from licensees about events that might be of interest to other licensees, has stimulated a great flood of mail that no one had had the time or the energy to sift through until the recent establishment of an industry office, the Nuclear Safety Analysis Center, supported by the power industry and devoting itself to the analysis of all "non-normal events" occurring at reactors. This is the beginning of what should have been undertaken long ago.

V

It seems likely that as long as the public regulatory agency and the power industry follow separate paths, there will continue to be cracks through which important precautionary measures can easily be swept. The light-water pressurized reactor, prototype of the overwhelming majority of American reactors, cannot be cut in two, with one part labeled safety-related and the other not, because the interactions between the two parts themselves have significant safety-connected implications. Therefore, the suggestion, sometimes seriously made, that all atomic reactors be run by a government-employed corps of technicians—somewhat the way airport safety landing systems are run—seems impractical.

Instead the government should consider eliminating the gap by combining its own efforts with those of industry, recognizing the industry's own technical and safety agencies as the delegates of the United States, empowered to discipline, inspect, observe, and evaluate the operating nuclear-power stations and to make recommendations for their improvement.

Obviously, government should not authorize the quasi-official status of the industry group unless presidential designees sit on its board of directors, and its staff contains at least some of the government's present employees in this field. The ensuing semi-public, semi-private regulatory institute of atomic power would be partly supported by public, partly by private funds.

There are existing self-regulating public-private agencies, like the National Association of Security Dealers. Any organization that fails to meet its standards is subjected to direct government regulations. In much the same way, a utility company that failed to meet the standards of the institute would be required to surrender its operating licenses to another qualified utility or to the institute itself. Representing in one body both the government regulatory interest and the private interest in making atomic energy work, such an institute would be capable of closing the present regulatory gaps and enabling the machines and their operators to talk in a continuous, common language.

It should astonish no one that in order to develop nuclear power with a widening margin of safety, unique contributions should be needed from government, and a unique collaboration between government and the developing industry should have to be devised. Government subsidization of new industries in the United States dates back to the earliest days of the republic. Most of the over-fifty generation, at least, were taught to cluck in horror at the immense land grants offered to the nascent railway companies to help persuade them of the profitability of traversing the continent. Fewer of us have read the revisionist economists who, comparing the efforts of modern developing countries to stimulate new enterprises under state capitalism, write that the United States got a bargain when it swapped undeveloped land for the effort of collecting and energizing capital to build railways.

The objections to government's connection with atomic power, however, are inspired less by the economic argument that government subsidization helps to line private pockets (although this argument is sometimes made by anti-nuclear protesters), than by the contention that government's connection with atomic power increases the people's exposure to risk. The present population does not expect this of government. In the present climate of opinion, government exists not to increase risks, but to minimize them. It checks the products of private industry to make sure they do not poison, cannot injure, have therapeutic value

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if they claim to have it. It warns people against smoking, lest they develop cancer or expose themselves to heightened cardiovascular risks; it polices the workshop; it oversees the designs of automobiles, and specifies the contents of their exhaust fumes, even if the changes it insists on decrease the number of miles cars can travel per gallon at a time when it is also seeking to increase the number. Can anyone imagine that such a government, so conceived, would have consented to the development of the automobile, knowing that the invention would cost about 40,000 lives a year?

The only basis on which a government charged with reducing the risks of change to human health, to environmental integrity, and to full employment could excuse its support of a new technology that might, in the course of an accident, however improbable, cost human lives (particularly in a way so subtle as to defy detection for perhaps twenty years), would be by arguing that these risks offset even greater risks.

That, however, was not the argument the government put forward in favor of atomic-energy development thirty years ago. Then, the argument was that nuclear power would be cheaper than coal. This argument has gone by the board and support for nuclear power now depends on a second argument: that the world's supply of fossil fuels is dwindling, that they are becoming far more expensive than anyone ever expected they would be, and that the expense might include the cost of war. The trouble is that a nation unwilling to believe that the petroleum shortage is not only "real" but the propelling reason behind its rise in price, may also be unwilling to believe that developing atomic energy is less risky than continuing to rely on the alternatives.

For this reason, the government is being politically prudent in not wanting to become too closely affiliated with the development of nuclear power, even though, as the Three Mile Island accident has made clear, the negative sanctions of a purely regulatory agency cannot accomplish the achievement of nuclear power with minimal risks. Nor can the industry, without government collaboration, impose adequate negative sanctions to insure that only capable operating enterprises run nuclear stations, and that they are staffed with appropriately trained and educated personnel, backed up by sound technology.

The political judgment that discourages the federal government from reaching for a new collaboration with the industry is amply reflected in the refusal of President Carter to move forward vigorously with the development of nuclear-power-station development. It seems incredible that American power policy in 1979 should have been more effectively determined by an expensive, but non-fatal, accident in Harrisburg than by the loss of the oil supply of Iran to American markets, an event whose duplication elsewhere in the superheated politics of the Middle East seems all too possible.

In opting for what amounts to neutrality on nuclear power—despite his call for a warlike mobilization to achieve energy independence—President Carter follows a line of political sapience marked out in the so-called Energy Project of the Harvard Business School edited by Robert Stobaugh and Daniel Yergin.* Describing the nuclear situation in the United States as a "stalemate," the editors explain that the opposition to nuclear energy is so powerful that the construction of light-water reactors and *even the continuing operation* of some present reactors are uncertain. While emphasizing that their pessimism is grounded in some technical questions, including the need for further study of the effect of low-level radiation, the editors urge a massive program of conservation as America's best hope for surviving the shrinkage of its energy resources.

But how much room is there, really, for conservation? Comparisons showing that we have a much higher per-capita energy consumption than other industrialized nations are misleading. The United States has far lower population densities than those of the industrialized nations of Europe and the Far East; it has very high agricultural productivity; its climate, untempered like Europe's by the Gulf Stream, produces intense cold and heat. Entire industries have developed around these facts of American life: the automobile, agricultural machinery, fertilizer manufacture and distribution, home heating and cooling, all the activities of intra-national travel, hotel-keeping—the list is endless. Conservation on the scale required must therefore mean a radical alteration and lowering of the standard on which Americans live.

So long as conservation of power is seen merely as an abstract ideal, involving the elimination of someone else's waste, its political acceptability is high. But when people more generally discover, as the automobile workers have already learned, that someone else's "waste" is what employs them, the political problems of conservation will rise (as they did briefly during the gasoline shortage in the summer of 1979), and may well outweigh the political problems of developing nuclear power.

All this is not to say that there does not exist strong opposition to the construction of further nuclear-generating stations and the continuing operation of those already in place. But the opposition seems less powerful than it did only a few months ago, when Three Mile Island was fresher in the mind. Moreover, the opposition seems concentrated in certain regions of the country, as well as in certain defined circles of society. Most referendum tests on atomic energy have resulted in defeats for the anti-nuclear movement. In Montana, where its power did succeed in forcing

* *Energy Future*: Report of the Energy Project at the Harvard Business School, ed. by Robert Stobaugh and Daniel Yergin, with I.C. Bupp, Random House, 1979.

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a state referendum before any nuclear station could be built, the anti-nuclear movement is roughly comparable with the local anti-coal mining movement, both being based on regional resistance to what some Montanans call the despoliation of the real West for the benefit of the urbanized East.

As among the development of hydroelectric power, coal mining, and nuclear energy, the last would impose the smallest risk of environmental change. But the point around which the resistance to nuclear power coalesces is its symbolic identification with the very heart and essence of the technological society. It *is* high technology, and high technology is bad because it contains the seeds of human destruction; no matter that none of the 74 operating reactors has had a fatal accident, what the opponents of nuclear energy *know* of its dangers transcends mere evidence.

For those groups in American society for whom opposition to nuclear power offers a central meaning to their lives—a separation from the mainstream that, however, need not be made more intense by giving up any of the comforts and amenities of American life one happens to find congenial—political conciliation would seem to be a waste of time.

But for millions of other Americans who fear nuclear power because they genuinely consider themselves subject to the dangers of explosion or the more insidious long-term risk of slow death by radiation, or who fear that property values will be adversely affected by the proximity of a present or proposed plant, political support by the President can be effective.

If energy independence is as important as war, what the nation needs from the Presidency is a declaration as electrifying as the statement by Franklin D. Roosevelt on January 6, 1942 that the nation could and would produce 100,000 combat planes a year now that it was at war. If the political problems of nuclear power overawe some, one wonders how they propose to deal with the political problems of the Middle East, and with declining employment and inflation in America. Even in the shadow of Three Mile Island, developing nuclear energy is both less intractable politically and—though many continue to doubt it—less risky than continuing to rely on oil.

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Radical Historians

James Nuechterlein

In a situation of some uncertainty, one thing at least can be said with assurance concerning contemporary American politics: it is a bad time for radicals and radicalism. The memories of the militant 1960's take on that glow of indulgent nostalgia we reserve for times far enough past to be safely assimilated. We recall in tranquility that which no longer portends or threatens. When those of every political persuasion agree that the dominant national mood reflects one form or another of conservatism, radicals can find sustenance only in memory and in hope that what once was might somehow be again. For the present moment, there is little at all to cheer them. The armies of radicalism no longer constitute a significant force on the battleground of American politics.

But they have not entirely been disbanded. They have instead withdrawn to their last redoubt: the colleges and universities of the nation. Not that America's campuses are immune to the national political climate; indeed, one regularly hears reports comparing today's students with the silent generation of the 1950's. In both cases, undergraduates are said to have exchanged political concerns for private interests, and to be preoccupied less with disrupting the system or building a new world than with finding themselves or getting into law school. That is not the way things are, however, with their professors. A good many former radical protesters from the 1960's have found tenured refuge within the universities, and they have managed to keep radicalism's dated voice alive on the campuses. Radical politics is moribund, but radical scholarship flourishes. Universities thus experience their own version of the generation gap: the newly conservative young causing consternation among the still radical not-so-young. The most common of faculty-club laments concerns the decline of political commitment and the rise of careerism and quietism in the new student generation.

It is in a way ironic that the nation's colleges, which we normally imagine as situated on the cutting edge of intellectual and political developments, should find themselves harboring so many echoes of a played-out political generation. Social science and humanities faculties all over the country serve as museums of a mood that the rest of the nation has put behind it. The political times have passed the campuses by. Yet the situation is not really surprising. Radicalism finds a natural home in the universities of the modern Western world, and America is no exception. Harvard and Berkeley voted for George McGovern even if no one else did, and Barry Commoner of the Citizens party, himself a professor, finds that he is among friends there. It has all happened before. In the years following World War II, for example, professors still immersed in depression-era radicalism denounced robber barons and reactionaries before their mildly skeptical middle-class students much the way today's radical assistant professors earnestly recount America's moral failures before bemused neoconservative undergraduates.

It has not been easy for those professors who are radicals to adjust to the changes in political attitudes. But their difficulties as scholars and teachers go deeper than vagaries of political mood. America presents an awkward and unsettling environment for radicalism, and radical scholars are out of phase and out of touch more profoundly than many of them care to comprehend. What follows explores that situation for history and historians, but the analysis could easily be extended to other fields of American studies. The burden of American radical history is but a particular case of the burden of American radicalism.

II

For the genuine radical, history ought to be, and sometimes is, an embarrassment. Those possessed of visions of a transformed reality in which men live in essential harmony with nature and each other are unlikely to find sustenance in the record of humanity's efforts to date. When a person yearns for wholeness, community, and fulfillment—for all the blessings of the cooperative commonwealth—he must be dismayed by the endless dismal accountings of frus-

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tration, fragmentation, and loss that make up the record of organized social life.

Not that history is only tragedy, of course. Men do not always fail, and the limited victories they have achieved need not be scorned because they were provisional or ambiguous. But only those conditioned by limited expectations of human capability can be satisfied by limited achievements, and such people are not, by definition, radicals. Those whose dreams of human possibility remain unconstrained by intimations of original sin and inevitable fallibility will ordinarily want to divest themselves of the burden of the past.

But ordinarily is not always. The past is not only difficult to ignore, but it provides, properly used, an imposing instrument of social persuasion. If, taken whole, history offers its greatest consolations to conservatives, liberals and even radicals have not come up entirely empty in their search for a usable past. As with the use of Scripture, one can, through artful selection, demonstrate from history pretty much what one chooses to. Romantics imagine lost golden ages and charlatans order them up at will, but beyond nostalgia and falsification lies the subtler weapon of selective extrapolation. One isolates the patterns of progress that come or are enticed to view and builds from them, at accelerated rates, the vision of how things might yet be. We might suggest, modifying Santayana, that those who cannot remember the past have the luxury of making it up as they go along.

America has always provided a particularly favorable environment for positive imaginings of the past by the Left. The nation that pictured itself born free and that saw its representative type as a figure of Adamic innocence never felt unduly oppressed by the weight of its history. While Americans were often ahistorical and sometimes anti-historical—Jefferson remarked typically, "I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past"—it was not primarily from these attitudes that the Left took encouragement in coming to terms with the problem of history. If the American past was in certain respects absent, it was more notable for its benevolent aspect while present. Americans typically experienced more of history's glories than its burdens. For them, the record of the past suggested not so much the inevitable limits as the limitless possibilities of human striving. The history of the nation presented an image of linear progression: good things at the origin continued duly to unfold in the direction of ever more bountiful freedom, prosperity, and justice.

If the consolations for the Left of a benevolent history belonged most obviously to liberals (Louis Hartz insisted in *The Liberal Tradition in America* that the American consensus rested overwhelmingly on the Lockean assumptions of free man in free society), they were not unavailable to radicals. As long as the Left could be imagined as a continuum, and not as divided into separate, indeed warring, compartments, liberals and radicals would be seen as differing over the route that politics might travel but not over its destination. During the height of Popular Front cooperation in the 1930's, for instance, even Communists could be portrayed simply as "liberals in a hurry."

THE progressive school of American historiography, which prevailed among intellectuals in the period between the wars, encouraged the assumption of unity on the Left. Writing in the aftermath of the social dislocations accompanying industrialization, the progressives—Charles Beard, Vernon Parrington, James Harvey Robinson—described political conflict in terms essentially dualistic, often Manichean. Their quasi-Marxist analysis emphasized economic and class conflict and presented that conflict in the various forms—aristocracy versus democracy, capitalist versus agrarian, business versus labor—in which they saw it manifested. Always the struggle matched Right against Left, and always, at least in the long run, the forces of progress won out. For all their concern over the recurring power of reaction in America, the progressives were fundamental optimists: for every Hamilton, there was a Jefferson; for every Webster, a Jackson; for every Hoover, a Franklin Roosevelt. (In certain ways the progressives stood outside the tradition of American exceptionalism in that they assumed that economic and class conflicts were everywhere, America included, the fundamental basis of politics and society, but their invincible optimism revealed the implicit, neo-exceptionalist supposition that the forces opposing progress were far weaker in America than elsewhere.) In the progressives' dualistic universe, the line between liberal and radical blurred to indistinction, obscured as it was by the common antipathy to the enemy on the Right. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., who reduced the essentials of American political history to a conflict between businessmen and everyone else, referred in typically vague fashion to the combined opponents of the business community as the "radical democracy."

In the years since 1945, however, the progressive view of things has come under a series of attacks from various directions, so much so that it would be difficult indeed to find a professional historian today who would identify himself as belonging to the progressive school (though I suspect that a good deal of classroom teaching still follows, willy-nilly, the modern Whiggish perspective underlying the progressive world view: the sense of a continuing pattern of development in the direction of greater human equality secured by collective action). In the breakdown of the progressive interpretation, the assumption of Left unity has come under recurring scrutiny, and the new skepticism concerning the Popular Front belief in no enemies on the Left has created both new opportunities and new problems for radicals interested in forg-

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ing their historical studies into political instruments.

III

The two decades following World War II provided for American intellectuals a context unconducive to progressive attitudes. The disillusionment with the Soviet Union and the rise of the cold war, the development of mass prosperity and the decline of industrial conflict, combined to prompt a rethinking of the national past. The old progressive dichotomies, once so compelling, now appeared irrelevant, and the emphasis on class conflict gave way to a new appreciation of the extraordinary degree of agreement on fundamental values among Americans of different strata.

Consensus historians, as they came to be known, did not deny the presence of conflict in American society, but they argued that those conflicts had existed, to a degree matched nowhere else, within a framework of essential agreement on a political economy of democratic capitalism. Progressive dualism, with its simplistic and moralistic drama of the people versus the interests, misread the essence of American history. Americans had fought among themselves, to be sure, but they had quarreled about how to administer the system and not, as elsewhere, about whether the system deserved to survive. And in many ways, the most pervasive and significant of American divisions had occurred not over economics but over matters related to race, religion, ethnicity, and region.

Thus it had been the peculiar American experience to avoid the ideological conflicts that had convulsed other nations in the process of modernization. Daniel Boorstin discovered *The Genius of American Politics* in the national preference for commonsense practicality over ideology. For Boorstin, "dreams made in Europe . . . were dissipated or transformed by the American reality." Here pragmatism reigned supreme, supported by a widespread prosperity (David Potter identified Americans as *The People of Plenty*) that made fundamental conflict—and thus ideology—unnecessary. So it was in America and so, largely, it had always been. Louis Hartz located the key to the American condition in the nation's non-feudal past. America, with no experience of an *ancien régime*, did not have to undergo a democratic revolution. Where the French Revolution had destroyed an aristocratic order, the American Revolution had simply preserved Lockean realities. There having been no extreme Right, an extreme Left never developed; there having been no feudalism, there was to be no socialism. America lacked ideology, in any formal sense, because it lacked the historical dialectic that had produced the European dogmas of Left and Right. In this absence, liberal consensus flourished.

The rise of consensus history had debilitating effects on radical uses of the past. The attack on progressive historiography weakened radicalism both by shrinking the distance between political extremes—politics in America was reduced in consensus perspectives to a narrow struggle for the Center—and by the related assumption that any form of ideological politics was alien to the American tradition. If all politics took place within the narrow bounds of classical liberal assumptions and if, in any case, American divisions over politics were more often sociocultural than socioeconomic in nature, then radicalism simply drifted out of the range of serious political discussion. The tendency to denigrate radicalism derived further major impetus, of course, from a cold-war atmosphere that made radical politics appear dangerously suspect as well as hopelessly anachronistic.

By the mid-1960's, however, a strong reaction had developed against consensus history and politics. A new generation of historians, removed from the anti-Communist passions of the postwar years, rediscovered Marx and rejected American uniqueness. Having witnessed —and often participated in—the indecorous, sometimes violent protests for racial equality and against the war in Vietnam, these activist scholars were unimpressed with a view of the past emphasizing stability and social harmony. Theirs was not an America immune from history's evils; instead, they portrayed a society disfigured in its present, as in its past, by enduring patterns of war, racism, and poverty.

Since so much of their passion issued from their anti-war sentiments, it is not surprising that these New Left historians devoted such careful attention to the history of American foreign relations. (Many young scholars participated in this, but it was the middle-aged William Appleman Williams who served as godfather to all the revisionists.) They produced a startling new version of the cold war, with America as the author and responsible party, and, working backward and forward in time, established a framework for the analysis of modern U.S. foreign policy featuring inexorable capitalist advance, usually under the rubric of "open-door expansionism." (Less imaginative scholarly predecessors had, in their impoverished lexicon, spoken of this simply as a desire for free trade.)

The New Leftists focused their energies in domestic history chiefly on what might be called the demystification of liberalism. They minimized presumed liberal achievements in social reform and the regulation of business (as in Gabriel Kolko reinterpreting the progressive era as *The Triumph of Conservatism*) and delighted in implicating liberals in what had earlier been seen as instances of right-wing repression (as in a number of studies of McCarthyism that devoted more attention to the inadequacies of Harry Truman, Hubert Humphrey, and the Americans for Demo-

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cratic Action than to the antics of the junior Senator from Wisconsin and his reactionary allies).

The attack on liberalism revealed the departures of the new radicalism from the old. If the New Leftists shared elements of mood and ideology with the progressives (they certainly spoke more respectfully of Charles Beard than the consensus historians had), they also differed from them in their fundamental sense of the American situation. The progressives, finally, were nationalists who believed in America. The New Left did not. Progressive dualism featured a moral conflict in which the forces of progress could normally be expected to carry the day; the moral universe of the New Left remained far more bleak. New Left historians could find few mainstream heroes to match an unlimited supply of villains.

Unlike the progressives, New Left historians found it difficult—and uncongenial—to differentiate among Jefferson, Jackson, or Roosevelt and their conservative enemies: all had accepted the basic political and economic rules of the American game. New Leftists wanted not to recapture a liberal past; they wanted to expose and transcend it. The liberal establishment stood as the primary obstacle to their political ambitions, the Old Right of business conservatives and their provincial political spokesmen having become irrelevant. What had seemed to progressives a genuinely reformist tradition presented itself to the New Left as an elegant facade for elite domination, all the more insidious for its surface plausibility. Behind the illusory achievements of social reform, the new radicals could see only bonds of social control. So intent were some New Leftists on dismantling the liberal past and discrediting liberal heroes that they even contrived to extend sympathetic treatment to outright conservatives—Herbert Hoover and Robert Taft, for example—who, but for their opposition to liberal stalwarts, would almost certainly have been more roughly handled.

The political upheavals that had generated New Left revisionism subsided with the cooling of racial conflict and the winding down of the war. A politics less inflamed found its correlative in scholarship less tendentiously ideological. This did not mean a reversion to consensus interpretations, however; even as the political mood of the 1970's seemed quirky, erratic, and difficult to label, so the world of American historiography entered a period resistant to precise classification. Some measure of radical impulse remained. The general public appeared to move uncertainly Right over the course of the decade, but, as already noted, enough student radicals from the 60's had become professors in the 70's to keep Left perspectives more acceptable in the universities than in the larger culture.

YET while a strain of radicalism persisted, the most significant shift in historical studies had to do only indirectly with questions of ideology. It was the rise of the new social history that dominated professional interest and attention in the 70's. Whatever its ideological implications, the new social history was most notably radical in its manner of defining what history as a field was all about. The new history turned scholars' attention away from their traditional preoccupations—political, institutional, and intellectual developments as determined by the most visible and prominent elements in society—toward a new emphasis on the aggregate everyday experiences of life by ordinary people.

The new history required of historians that they immerse themselves in the perspectives of outside disciplines: anthropology and sociology, demography and statistics. In terms of substance, fashionable interests turned to the history of women and the family; of racial and ethnic minorities; of popular social movements; of the working class (not including mainstream trade unions or their leaders); of mass religious experience; of slavery (from the perspective of the slave quarters); of community development; of social mobility (or—in some cases preferably—of its absence). Farewell to great men (and occasional women), great ideas, and great events; today the history of everyperson. Laurence Veysey summed up the canons of the new history as a preference for quantitative evidence (traditional literary sources being "always the product of a small elite") and, more broadly, as the sense "that history should be viewed in terms of the processes affecting the great majority of people alive at any given time, with special attention to the anonymously downtrodden, those whose standard of living and prestige are the lowest."

Veysey's reference to the "anonymously downtrodden" indicates the affinity apparent between the New Left and much of the new social history (although Veysey himself minimizes the connection). It was Jesse Lemisch, one of the most militant of New Left historians, who urged that American history be rewritten "from the bottom up," and many social historians are dedicated to doing just that. They write of the masses and, presumably, from the masses' perspective (though not often, it should be noted, *for* the masses: a good deal of the new social history is inelegant at best and unreadable at worst, and a heavy reliance on statistical analysis combined with a weakness for sociological abstractions makes much of it accessible only to the most persevering professional readers). There are, it is true, a great many exceptions. Even as many social historians write readable prose, so also do many carry on their research unencumbered by restrictive ideological presuppositions. The new social history is less a conceptual monolith than was the New Left. Nonetheless, Professor Lois Banner's generalization concerning practitioners of women's history—"they adopt a model of oppression and try to find the sources of that oppression and of past attempts at liberation

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from it"—could easily be extended to laborers in other sections of the social-history vineyard.

The radical populists and the Marxists among the social historians share with the New Left a preoccupation with the inadequacies of liberalism. Unresolvable class conflict is to them the engine of social life and they join the 60's radicals in identifying as liberalism's greatest culpability its evasion of that reality. The New Left relentlessly attempted to expose liberal political reform as a more-or-less conscious sham, intended essentially to deflect radicalism by offering token or even fraudulent gestures of change; its only positive function, so the argument went, lay in its often ingenious use by entrenched corporate groups to protect and extend their interests. Radical social historians characteristically make the same points by ignoring electoral or legislative politics altogether. Some of this has to do less with ideology than with historiographical fashion, but for those so inclined, how better indicate the meaninglessness of politics for people's lives than by leaving it out of accounts of those lives? (Radical political movements, of course, are exempt from the general ban.)

IV

THE extensive common ground between the New Left and the radical fringes of the new social history becomes clear in a recent left-wing survey of American history, *A People's History of the United States,* by Howard Zinn of Boston University.* Based heavily on a wide—if radically-skewed—range of secondary works, Zinn's populist social history provides a useful source for an analysis of recent radical uses of the past. It also reveals, quite unintentionally, the continuing dilemma of radicals anxious to find in the American experience resources for the social revolution of which they dream.

For those accustomed to conventional histories and unfamiliar with current radical preoccupations, *A People's History* will indeed provide, as the dust jacket suggests, a "surprising new look at American history." Through Zinn, Jesse Lemisch's dream of seeing things from the bottom up has found expression. This is, in the author's words, "the story of the discovery of America from the viewpoint of the Arawaks, of the Constitution from the standpoint of the slaves, of Andrew Jackson as seen by the Cherokees, . . . of the rise of industrialism as seen by the young women in the Lowell textile mills, . . . the conquest of the Philippines as seen by black soldiers on Luzon, . . . the First World War as seen by socialists, the Second World War as seen by pacifists, the New Deal as seen by blacks in Harlem, the postwar American empire as seen by peons in Latin America."

Zinn is the ultimate populist historian. Most national histories, he suggests, commit the fallacy of telling the story of the United States—or of any nation—as that of a community of people with a set of common interests. But, Zinn insists, nations are not communities and the idea of a unitary "national interest" disguises the reality within all societies of intense conflicts which, while varied in form, come down to a fundamental social division between "victims and executioners." It is the job, then, of humane American scholars to take the side of the victims—blacks, women, Indians, prisoners, working-class whites, the poor—against their oppressors and write history accordingly. Having laid out his preferences, and on the apparent assumption that, biases once confessed, anything goes, he proceeds to construct a morality tale. Zinn denies that it is his intention to romanticize the victims or vilify the executioners, but that is the way the book turns out. His rhapsodizing about Indian life, for example—before, of course, the horrors of European intrusion—has to be read to be believed, and it seems beyond his capacity to credit decency of motive to anyone not of the lower classes. Given his vision of social reality, it is difficult to see how it could be otherwise.

Since, for Zinn, mainstream politics tends to be of, by, and for the elite and touches only peripherally the true needs and concerns of the people, his book dwells but occasionally, and then normally in terms of disparagement, on the usual stuff of textbook history. The reader will learn little or nothing here of Hamilton's financial program, Jackson's struggle with the Bank of the United States, the Kansas-Nebraska Act and its implications for sectional conflict, disputes over the tariff, the development of regulatory control over business activity, the rise of the welfare state. Great American statesmen are notable by their absence and by the skepticism—if not outright dismissal—with which they are treated when present. Influential individuals and groups come into view only when bad things have to be accounted for, electoral politics only as "an ingenious mode of control," social and economic reform only as desperate efforts to resist the socialist challenge. Not even the new political history, which draws attention away from national issues and political leaders down to the ethnocultural bases of mass politics, can induce Zinn to suppose that politics has anything genuine to do with popular concerns. Nor is he interested in economic development, except insofar as it is based in exploitation and distributes its rewards unfairly. There is for him no economic problem; from his account one might suppose that economic prosperity develops by spontaneous generation.

Zinn's history, then, takes place outside the ordinary channels of public activity and among the anonymous of society. When his dispossessed make contact with public authority, it is in the form of

* Harper & Row, 614 pp., $20.00.

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resistance: riots, strikes, protests, military desertions, refusals—great and small—of every imagining. The people, at least the authentic people, are always in protest. For long stretches, indeed, *A People's History* consists of little more than descriptions of one public disturbance after another, the tedium of which is relieved only by Zinn's lively prose (he writes better than many of his radical colleagues) and by his extensive, and often effective, use of quotations. Zinn prefers his protesters to be as unruly and intransigent as possible. Those who work through the system and for limited gains (Samuel Gompers and the AFL) ineyitably get compared to their disadvantage with those (Big Bill Haywood and the IWW) who will not be mollified. Even relatively militant organizations, like the CIO of the 1930's, fall under the author's disfavor when they give up their wildcat protests and instead "channel the workers' insurrectionary energy" into the prosaic paths of collective bargaining and social democracy.

The problem for Zinn and for radical historians generally is that while they imagine the people existing in a state of perpetual protest, the people seem, in the end, to have so little to show for it. Things change, but—from the radical perspective—nothing changes. The system remains securely in place, the establishment firmly in control. This poses a particular dilemma for Zinn, who is not content merely to record a history of oppression. Although he intermittently senses that he is dealing with unpromising materials, he wants to extract from history a measure of radical hope, to use the past to "anticipate a possible future." He says that he does not want to "invent" people's victories, but he nonetheless operates at, and sometimes beyond, the limits of plausible interpretation in ferreting them out of the record. Zinn is forever seeing things on the edge of slipping out of control, the people poised at the point of rebellion. But it never quite happens.

WHY it is that what so obviously should happen does not requires a good deal of explaining. Part of Zinn's answer lies in the elite's infernal talent for deflecting the people's anger back among themselves, away from its rightful target:

> How skillful to tax the middle class to pay for the relief of the poor, building resentment on top of humiliation! How adroit to bus poor black youngsters into poor white neighborhoods, in a violent exchange of impoverished schools, while the schools of the rich remain untouched and the wealth of the nation, doled out carefully where children need free milk, is drained for billion-dollar aircraft carriers. How ingenious to meet the demands of blacks and women for equality by giving them small special benefits, and setting them in competition with everyone else for jobs made scarce by an irrational, wasteful system. How wise to turn the fear and anger of the majority toward a class of criminals bred—by economic inequity—faster than they can be put away, deflecting attention from the huge thefts of national resources carried out within the law by men in executive offices.

When it is not conspiring to divide and conquer, the establishment relies on its "twin tactics of control in the face of revolutionary challenge: reform and repression." While Zinn's elite does not shrink from coercion—it will, he says, "if necessary to maintain its control, kill us"—it prefers subtler methods of social dominance. It offers just enough mobility, just enough prosperity, just enough freedom to beguile a population already socialized into its values through the functioning of schools, churches, families, the political system, and the instruments of mass culture. The American system of control—"the most ingenious . . . in world history"—keeps itself going through an elaborate pattern of "small rewards" sufficient to maintain the loyalty of a middle class delegated to act as "guards of the system." Should even that buffer fail, Zinn suggests, the elite will turn, as it has so often in the past, to its "ultimate weapon" of foreign intervention and war as a way of sustaining capitalism, diverting attention from domestic conflict, and creating that artificial sense of national unity necessary to supplant the genuine community of interest among the poor.

Given the extraordinary sophistication and suppleness of the system he describes, we might well expect Zinn to be reduced to despair, as so many radicals in fact are. Yet, as already indicated, that is not at all the case; his is an irrepressibly sanguine temperament. Zinn's people continue, no matter what, to resist and rebel, and he can discern in the most mundane forms of discontent signs of the times. Things may yet, he hopes, "get out of hand." And when they do, Zinn presents us, in a lyrical conclusion, with a vision of a world transformed:

> The society's levers of powers would have to be taken away from those whose drives have led to the present state—the giant corporations, the military, and their politician collaborators. We would need . . . to reconstruct the economy for both efficiency and justice, producing in a cooperative way what people need most. . . . Everyone could share the routine but necessary jobs for a few hours a day, and leave most of the time free for enjoyment, creativity, labors of love, and yet produce enough for an equal and ample distribution of goods. Certain basic things would be abundant enough to be taken out of the money system and be available—free—to everyone: food, housing, health care, education, transportation.
>
> The great problem would be to work out a way of accomplishing this without a centralized bureaucracy, using not the incentives of prison and punishment, but those incentives of cooperation which spring from natural human desires.

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. . . Decisions would be made by small groups of people in their workplaces, their neighborhoods —a network of cooperatives . . . a neighborly socialism avoiding the class hierarchies of capitalism and the harsh dictatorships that have taken the name "socialist."

People with time, in friendly communities, might create a new, diversified, nonviolent culture. . . . Men and women, black and white, old and young, could then cherish their differences as positive attributes, not as reasons for domination. New values of cooperation and freedom might then show up in the relations of people, the upbringing of children.

In the end, we either believe in that sort of thing or we do not, but even those who believe ought to understand that they must find support for their vision in eschatological hope and not, Zinn's willed illusions to the contrary notwithstanding, in the record of the past.

V

Not all radical historians, of course, go as far as Zinn in utopian projections, in populist romanticism, or in selective sorting of the past for present purposes. More tough-minded radicals, one suspects, would resist any notion that *A People's History of the United States* represents the state of the radical historian's art. Yet the problems exemplified in Zinn's book plague other, more subtle, left-wing historians as well, and they do so because they are inherent in the nature of American history. The contradictions of radical history show up with particular and ironic clarity in the works of recent radical scholars themselves.*

Radical historians have always lined themselves up on the side of the people. Traditional radical historiography did so in such a way, however, as to diminish the people even as it celebrated them. For progressive historians, and much of the New Left, the people remained a generalized abstraction, lacking discrete definition, identity, or autonomy. The people's leaders took on specificity and personality, but those in whose name they struggled remained, by and large, in impenetrable obscurity. The people were that great mass to whom things and history happened. They were often announced as about to arise or as on the march, but theirs were lives imagined essentially only in reaction to impersonal forces or to the significant few who served as history's actors. Radical historians did the people every honor except to recognize them as independent human beings.

It is the great achievement of the new social history that it is beginning to turn this around. By use both of massive quantitative evidence, now made accessible by the computer, and of previously underused oral and written sources, the new historians are managing effectively to portray something of the reality, both collective and individual, of the lives of ordinary men and women of the past. The search for reality is not infrequently undercut, it must be noted, by lingering strains of populist sentimentality: those social historians who find it necessary to insist repetitively and self-consciously on the dignity, courage, and decency with which those of whom they write carried on their lives patronize their readers and their subjects alike. Still, the people come into their own in this new history as subjects and not just objects; they act as well as being acted upon. The lines of influence between the general culture and various subcultures are seen to be not unilinear and direct but reciprocal and mediated. The working-class immigrants, slaves—these and other groups earlier lost to detailed analysis can now be understood with a new depth and sophistication and, more important, can be appreciated as being, in no small part, creators of their own culture and makers of their own history.

Yet that is precisely the problem: people who are makers of their history are responsible for their history. And radicals do not like the history the people appear to have chosen. For radicals, old and new, the American system has consistently operated in ways contrary to the interests of the working class. The workers, in this view, should have been in that state of constant agitation Zinn sometimes likes to imagine for them. Yet clearly they have not been. Zinn and others regularly fail to distinguish between worker militance on work-related issues and fundamental protest against the system; they confuse, in their hopefulness, job consciousness with class consciousness. So the dilemma remains: the people, whom radical historians want to see as self-determining and self-defining, seem to be implicated in their own victimization. They accept, or at least acquiesce in, a system that oppresses them.

The unwillingness of the working class to think and behave in the way radicals would have them is but one element in the larger embarrassment of radical history. The history of the American Left is a history of failure: socialism has never taken hold and remains weaker than in any other Western industrial nation; radical movements have characteristically lacked continuity and ideological coherence; the union movement has settled for more and better of what already is rather than dreaming of something different.

Radical historians have attempted in a variety of ways to explain all this away. Some have focused on repression, but while it unquestionably existed, it hardly did so in more severe forms than in all those countries where radicalism has, at least in comparative terms, flourished. Some emphasized the failure or betrayal of working-class lead-

* For a brief and dispassionate review of recent perspectives on American radical history, see Robert Rosenstone, "Summing Up the Division of the Left," *Reviews in American History*, VII (September 1979), pp 439-444.

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ers, but the otherworldliness of Eugene Debs and the compromises of Samuel Gompers can bear only so much explanatory weight. Others have observed simply that the final returns are not yet in. Things may only have been delayed, and the failure of socialism in the past says nothing definitive concerning its prospects in the future. This argument had some cogency in the days of Left unity. Those who saw radicalism as the logical extension of liberalism could point to a line of progress from mugwumpery through populism and progressivism to the New Deal, and, plotting that line into the future, could point with no little plausibility to its final destination in socialism. Yet that line of logical progression has been severed by the radicals themselves, who see liberalism not as radicalism's progenitor but as its most insidious enemy. To them, radicalism exists as liberalism's alternative rather than its culmination. Thus radicalism now stands, by its own choice, independent and exposed in the American political spectrum; it can no longer look to liberalism's past successes as a beacon for future hope, but must depend on its own meager historical resources.

EXPLANATIONS for the failure of American radicalism are not difficult to come by. Students of the subject, some radicals included, have pointed to such obvious factors as the absence of class identification, rising living standards, extensive social mobility, ethnic heterogeneity, and the early extension of the suffrage to the working class. The deeper reality to which most of these elements, ethnic pluralism excepted, point is one which many radicals cannot bear to contemplate. They will engage in the most elaborate and tortuous intellectual gymnastics in order to avoid confronting Carl Degler's conclusion that "in the final reckoning . . . the failure of socialism in America is to be attributed to the success of capitalism." (The German sociologist Werner Sombart made the same point rather more prosaically early in the century when he noted that "all socialist utopias have come to grief on roast beef and apple pie.")

Rather than ponder the obvious, radicals prefer to take refuge in the obfuscations of "false consciousness." The people may choose, but they do not choose well, bemused as they are by the encompassing "hegemonic" values of bourgeois culture. The concept of false consciousness is among the least morally attractive of radical inventions: it is surely the height of arrogance to define as inauthentic any consciousness other than one's own. The category also cuts against the grain of the attempt to impute self-definition and dignity to the working class, since it would seem difficult to have respect for those as easily duped and deluded as this line of thought suggests. How can we think highly of those who have not the sense to know their own interests? If the people are so easily deflected and cajoled, they become little more than the inert "great beast" Hamilton is supposed to have conjured up.

If, however, we free ourselves from obscurantist categories and begin to address on their own terms the decisions made by people in the past, we might obtain a less condescending view of working-class consciousness. We might see that most workers and their families, recognizing instinctively the limits and trade-offs all social systems impose, sensed that life within the American industrial system, for all its burdens, offered them more than did any realistic alternative. If they knew that Horatio Alger (if they had read him) and his tales of rags-to-riches had nothing to do with most of them, they also knew, as Stephan Thernstrom and others have reminded us, that rags-to-respectability was a real possibility. In that sense, the American Dream was not a fraud; social mobility did exist, as did rising real wages. So also the political system, which clearly they did not run and whose first priority was not their welfare, nonetheless offered more participation, more accessibility, more responsiveness to the concerns of people like themselves than did that of any other country. In most of Europe, the "political nation" excluded the workers; in America, the workers had a place, however marginal, within the political community. From what we know of late 19th-century voter participation rates, we can see that conventional politics did not appear so meaningless to people at the time as it has to radical historians since.

The people, then, were neither dupes, nor cynics, nor creatures of little faith. They simply did not put nearly so heavy an emphasis on workplace or political agitation as their left-wing chroniclers think or wish they had. Radical historians, perceiving that workers did not find brotherhood, fulfillment, or autonomy in the public sphere, can only suppose that these things therefore did not exist for them. They forget that, then as now, it is to the realms of family, friendship, church, and ethnic community that most people look for their deepest satisfactions. The workers had a better sense of the limits of public life than have those who tell their story. Moreover, those "hegemonic" values of leisure, affluence, and consumption which many workers adopted represented not the moral detritus of a corrupt bourgeois culture but a range of proximate ends forming one part of a larger structure of purpose and meaning. It is remarkable that radical historians, who insist on the nuances of lower-class culture, should regularly write of the middle class and its values in terms of such crude caricature.

ALL this is not to suggest that we should exchange for the fantasy of class warfare a myth of stable harmony. The costs of modernization in America, less heavy than elsewhere, were heavy nonetheless. There were real victims—blacks, Indians, the desperately poor—as

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there also was bitterness, apathy, and rage. Some workers fought intensely to retain pre-industrial norms; others dreamed of a new cooperative order. America was an enormously complex society, and historical generalizations necessarily hide some things and distort others. But we cannot, as historians, be satisfied only and forever with particular pieces of the past; we must try for certain purposes to put them together into a larger picture. And when we do, it seems clear that the story sketched above is more faithful to the evidence of how things were and of how people behaved than is the radical historian's alternative.

Skeptics might object that this version of things suggests too much of the consensus interpretation of the American past, which currently is regarded as something of a historiographical anachronism. But fashions in historical understanding have little to do with the substance of the evidence. Historical knowledge is cumulative, but historical interpretations are not. We change our minds about the past less often because the evidence requires us to than because we have new questions to ask of it or have new ideological concerns to bring to it.

Once again, the argument against radical views, and for consensus, can be found in much radical history itself. After all, the rage of New Left historians against the American past and present developed because they, unlike the progressives, found it so difficult to discern signs of radical hope in the American experience. In political instincts, they shared much with the progressives, but their history tended to disregard progressive dualisms and to interpret America and Americans as a social unit, emphasizing, as had consensus history, a common set of national values dissented from by only a small minority of the people. That is why there were, for them, small distinctions but no real differences between Hamilton and Jefferson, or Hoover and Roosevelt. Consensus history itself did not always celebrate what it recorded; analytical descriptions of the past need not coincide with normative judgments. The essential consensus argument asserted that American political, social, and economic development had differed significantly from that of other Western industrial nations, and much that radical historians have written, stripped of its rhetorical flourishes, has not disagreed with that. The notion of false consciousness is then but one of many devices for finessing what cannot be ignored.

Which is why, as noted earlier, most American radicals know that for their hopes to be realized the past must be transcended, not recaptured. It cannot even be extensively built upon; the road to the radical utopia lies blocked, as it ever has been, by Sombart's roast beef and apple pie. And when such a diet is provided in an environment which offers opportunity for individual dignity and freedom as well, it is hard to see how, or why, the roadblock might be removed, especially when the utopia that supposedly lies beyond is constructed of cotton candy.

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Versions of Walter Lippmann

Kenneth S. Lynn

When a military conscription bill finally cleared the U.S. Congress in May 1917, one of the measure's earliest and warmest advocates in the world of journalism suddenly realized that he himself might very well be called to the colors. The superbly healthy twenty-seven-year-old bachelor thereupon wrote to Newton D. Baker, the Secretary of War, asking for an exemption. After searching his soul as candidly as he knew how, said Walter Lippmann, he had decided that he could better serve the nation in some other way than as a soldier. Worry about his parents—in whose New York City home he still lived—also affected his decision. "My father is dying," he informed the Secretary, "and my mother is absolutely alone in the world. She does not know what his condition is, and I cannot tell anyone for fear it would become known."

In *Walter Lippmann and the American Century*,* Ronald Steel adds to his account of this episode the passing observation that Lippmann's father "was not to die for another ten years." As if unaware of the disturbing implications of this tidbit, Steel then drops the subject of Lippmann's letter to Baker and hastens on to the next item of business on his rapidly unfolding agenda. It apparently did not occur to him that readers interested in the moral history of a moralist might be curious to know the nature of the ailment that Lippmann's father was suffering from in the spring of 1917, and whether the sick man really did appear to be at death's door. Why Lippmann wanted Baker to know that he had not told anyone else about his father's condition is another suspicious point that Steel glides blithely past. As for Lippmann's expressed compassion for his mother's loneliness, it, too, raises a question, for Daisy Lippmann was an imperious woman who utterly dominated her husband and who would have dominated her only child as well if he had not contrived to put an emotional distance between them from his boyhood onward. Was the concern about her that Lippmann voiced to Baker the product of a belated guilt feeling, or did it represent a further instance of the letter writer's effort to manipulate the sympathies of the Secretary of War? Our ability to answer this question would certainly be improved if we knew what, if anything, Lippmann did to ease his mother's loneliness in 1927 when she finally did lose her husband, but unfortunately Steel has not bothered to investigate this matter either.

It also seems not to have occurred to him to keep reminding us about the letter to Baker in the course of describing the events immediately following. If Lippmann had allowed himself to be drafted, he might have been able to stay on with his parents for several months before his number came up. But the price of his successful attempt to dodge the draft was that he leave home without delay, and he paid it without a qualm. Three days after sending the letter to Baker, he joyfully accepted the Secretary's answering invitation to join his staff in a civilian capacity. Less than three weeks later, Lippmann was on the train for Washington.

Steel's failure to deal analytically with the letter to Baker is altogether characteristic of his lack of biographical imagination. Time and again, he misses the chance to confront the complexities of the man he is writing about. No other journalist in our history has ever thought more profoundly or written more beautifully about democracy in America than Lippmann did. At the same time, however, that he dedicated his mind to democratic problems, he defined himself as a superior being to whom the democratic obligations of ordinary citizens did not apply. A similar contradiction marked his career as a moralist. Not content with the authority that accrued to him as the most well-known political commentator of the 20th century, Lippmann sought to be recognized as the conscience of mankind. Yet while he held the conduct of other people to a very high standard indeed, mankind's self-appointed conscience was himself guilty of conscienceless acts.

Because Steel has been unwilling—or unable—to think about these contradictions, he has very little sense of the personality pattern they help to describe. The strength, such as it is, of his biography lies in its command of the purely external facts of Lippmann's life.

From the time that he entered Harvard with the famous class of 1910—the class to which T. S. Eliot, John Reed, Robert Edmond Jones, H. V. Kaltenborn, Bronson Cutting, Heywood Broun, and Alan Seeger also belonged—it was clear that Lippmann was one of the most amazing young men in the world. Before he was old enough to vote, the brilliant and the powerful had begun to beat a path to his door, as they would keep on doing for the rest of his life. A literary career that would eventually be marked by a dozen major books, several hundred articles, and several thousand editorials and columns was launched with a series of essays in the *Harvard Monthly*, one of which so enthralled Professor William James that he sought out Lippmann in his

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dormitory and congratulated him. The visiting British lecturer Graham Wallas felt so indebted to the ideas of this *Wunderkind* that after his return to Britain he dedicated a book to him. Professor George Santayana was so impressed by Lippmann's promise as a philosopher that he invited him to stay on at Harvard as his assistant. When Lincoln Steffens appeared in Cambridge in search of a bright young man to help him with the muckraking pieces he was writing for *Everybody's*, everyone he talked to told him to hire Lippmann.

In 1912, the Socialist mayor of Schenectady, George Lunn, succeeded in persuading Lippmann to become his administrative assistant. A year later, Herbert Croly invited him to join the staff of the newly formed *New Republic*. After the war, Herbert Bayard Swope lured him onto the New York *World*, and in 1924 Lippmann assumed command of the *World*'s editorial page. When the *World* was bought by Scripps-Howard in 1931 and merged with the *Telegram*, Lippmann chose from the multitudinous offers that poured in on him to become a syndicated columnist for the New York *Herald-Tribune*. For the next thirty-five years, the column brought him a degree of power that no other newspaper writer has ever matched. On his trips abroad, potentates and sages alike vied for the chance to see him. In Washington, his journalistic influence was in a class by itself.

But what was Lippmann like as a person? *Walter Lippmann and the American Century* conspicuously fails to deal with that vital question. Even though Steel is familiar with thousands of details about Lippmann's career, Lippmann has remained a stranger to him. As a result, he repeatedly gets caught off guard in his narrative by things that Lippmann says or does, and in his confusion all he can think to do is doggedly record them, make a brief statement that pretends to understanding, and move on. Thus when Lippmann decries in his second book, *Drift and Mastery* (1914), the very mode of analysis that informs his first, *A Preface to Politics* (1913), Steel weakly says, "If nothing else, *Drift and Mastery* showed Lippmann's intellectual flexibility, his willingness to jettison old ideas as soon as new ones were at hand." But what was it in Lippmann's make-up that made him so willing to be so flexible—and that would lead him to forswear a staggering number of other enthusiasms in the course of his career? To ascribe his changeableness to intellectual flexibility is simply to restate the problem.

Steel is equally at a loss to account for Lippmann's attitude toward the Jews in Germany in the 1930's. This attitude first appeared in a column written in the spring of 1933, not long after the Nazis began making bonfires out of books written by Jews and "liberals." Hitler is preparing for war, Lippmann warned, and only two factors are holding him in check: fear of the French army and the psychic satisfactions afforded by the pogrom against the Jews. The peculiar implication of the column was that Jewish suffering was protecting the peace of Europe. A week later, Lippmann again addressed himself to events in Germany, this time hailing a speech by Hitler, in which the dictator surprisingly promised that Germany would not seek to settle its political claims by force, as a genuinely statesmanlike address. There will be some who say, wrote Lippmann, that the speech was insincere. "I do not take this view. The truer explanation, I believe, is that we have heard once more, through the fog and the din, the hysteria and the animal passions of a great revolution, the authentic voice of a genuinely civilized people." Uncivilized deeds were being committed every day in Germany, he admitted, but these atrocities did not reflect the whole nature of the German people:

> Who that has studied history and cares for the truth would judge the French people by what went on during the Terror? Or the British people by what happened in Ireland? Or the American people by the hideous record of lynchings? Or the Catholic Church by the Spanish Inquisition? Or Protestantism by the Ku Klux Klan? Or the Jews by their parvenus?

The brutishness of the Nazis, in other words, was a blot on the fair face of civilization, but so was the vulgarity of upstart Jews. Lippmann's placement of the two phenomena on the same moral plane was outrageous, and so was the accompanying innuendo that some of the Jews in Germany had been so pushy that they had brought their persecution upon themselves. In this column, says his plainly shocked biographer, Lippmann went beyond the "celebrated disinterestedness" of most of his work into a "tortured analysis" that was "deeply revealing." Presumably Steel means that the column had revealed something about Lippmann himself. But what was it that was revealed? Steel does not say. Earlier in his book he had called attention to Lippmann's choice of Gentile women as marital partners, to his membership in exclusionistic clubs, and to his steadfast refusal to identify himself with Jewish groups or Jewish causes of any kind, so perhaps we are supposed to guess that the self-revelation in question is that Lippmann was ashamed of being Jewish. But shame does not account for the brutal callousness of Lippmann's remarks, any more than intellectual flexibility does for his fickle habit of repudiating his previous opinions. Furthermore, the biographer does not ask himself whether the callousness and the fickleness might somehow have been related.

The Lippmannesque figure who is the central character in Louis Auchincloss's new novel, *The House of the Prophet*,* observes that in order to write a successful biography a writer must know how to pick and choose among the available materials. Having been Lippmann's lawyer, Auchincloss may very well be in command of as much information about the columnist's life as Steel possesses. But unlike Steel, Auchincloss has known how to pick and choose, for he has a profound understanding of the man he is writing about. As a result, *The House of the Prophet* gives us more insight into Lippmann in 275 pages than *Walter Lippmann and the American Century* does in 600. That comparison, however, is too faint a way to praise Auchincloss's

* Houghton Mifflin, 275 pp., $10.95.

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achievement. In the lights and darks of Lippmann's life, Auchincloss has at last found a subject that fully challenges his imaginative gifts. The powerful literary portrait he produced a decade and a half ago in *The Rector of Justin* has now been surpassed both in psychological subtlety and moral significance.

Like *The Rector of Justin, The House of the Prophet* is a fictional biography, told from several different points of view. The biographer who has solicited recollections of Felix Leitner, the famous columnist, from a number of his admirers and detractors, and who is himself the principal narrator, is the great man's long-time and utterly adoring research assistant, Roger Cutter. Through the multiple perspectives of its various narratives, the biography asks us to consider whether Leitner was a sort of intellectual saint, whose exalted mission it was to tell the world the political and moral truth, or a monster of self who had pursued what he thought of as the good things in life—public glory, the joy of writing, the ease of wealth—at no matter what cost to others, so long as their pain did not show enough to spoil his fun. On occasions that range from summer walks on Mount Desert Island to Georgetown dinner parties to a barge trip through the south of France, these polar interpretations of the protagonist's life are expanded and qualified by dramatic illustration and explicit formulation. Perhaps the most penetrating of the many attempts to sum up what made Leitner tick is put forward by his former law partner, Grant Stowe. (Before turning to column writing, Leitner had briefly been a Wall Street lawyer.) Still bitter that his former associate had quickly betrayed the best interests of their firm, Stowe asserts that

> the man was an egotist, pure and simple. He was incapable of conforming to any pattern, noble or ignoble. Sooner or later he was bound to separate himself from the team, whatever team it might be, and redefine himself in relation to it in less than complimentary terms. The reason he was so dangerous was that the pleasure that he derived in separating himself from the team was greater than any material or even moral advantage that he might possibly derive from staying with it.

Although Stowe's analysis is by no means the last word about Leitner, it carries us a long way toward understanding why the columnist was so willing to sever any sort of tie—familial, religious, patriotic, intellectual—that bound him to other people, or even to his own earlier self as expressed in his writings: his extraordinarily self-centered, emotionally stunted personality got a big kick out of betrayals.

Leitner's dissociation of himself from his Jewish heritage is certainly better explained by this appraisal than by the familiar explanation of Lippmann as a social-climbing snob who was ashamed of being Jewish. Leitner himself is witheringly sarcastic about the snob theory. Appalled by the thought that some day a biographer might be so uncomprehending as to write about "my being ashamed of my Jewish heritage, my denial of my past, my cultivation of Wasp society," he exclaims, "Oh, it's too nauseating to think of! Why, in an America that is rapidly approaching classlessness, are our historians and sociologists so obsessed with class distinctions?" Proud Felix Leitner had never been ashamed of anything in his life; if he had decided not to keep up his identity as a Jew, it was for intellectual and spiritual reasons. Yet if the columnist's scorn is sufficient to demolish the charge that his decision to distance himself from Jewish groups and Jewish causes was governed by shame, it is significant that he does not address himself to the possibility that it was governed by pleasure.

His egotistical aversion to team play again seems evident in his successful attempt to avoid army service in 1917. And only a man who found a twisted delight in hurting people who were counting on him could have behaved as Leitner does in the central episode of *The House of the Prophet*, the episode that Leitner's biographer, Roger Cutter, describes as "the single most important emotional and moral event" of the columnist's life, the episode in which two marriages are destroyed and a long-term male friendship ends in devastating humiliation.

Steel's treatment of the parallel episode in Lippmann's life seems much more fictional, in a sense, than Auchincloss's, for the romantic details he chooses to play up, and his lack of a critical attitude toward the "hero" and the "heroine," are the soggy stuff of which stories in magazines like *Woman's Home Companion* and *Good Housekeeping* are made. Walter Lippmann and Hamilton Fish Armstrong, the editor of *Foreign Affairs*, were as close as Damon and Pythias, Steel tells us, except that the friendship was not equal, for Armstrong worshipped the ground that Lippmann walked on. The two men lunched together once or twice a week at the Century Club; they sat together at meetings of the Council on Foreign Relations; they spoke on the phone nearly every day. Moreover, the two friends and their wives, Faye Albertson Lippmann and Helen Byrne Armstrong, often dined *à quatre* in New York and visited each other's country homes, and in 1934 they went off together for a tour of Egypt and the Mediterranean. Then one afternoon in May 1937, Armstrong phoned Lippmann to say that he was held up at the office. Would Walter mind taking Helen to dinner? Lippmann took her to the Rainbow Room in the newly constructed tower of Rockefeller Center. Over drinks he began to tell Helen how lonely he felt in his marriage. "She listened gravely, asked questions delicately, softly laid her hand on his. They drank more wine than they were used to. They danced on the crowded floor, holding each other closer than they ever had before."

Onward the narrative oozes. Lippmann and Helen "plunged wildly" into an affair. Armstrong soon found out about it, but was willing "to forgive all." The lovers then discovered that they could not give one another up, and so Lippmann wrote Faye a letter, informing her that he wanted a divorce. "I do not know," the letter began, "whether this will seem to you an indirect way of dealing with the affair." In the one sentence in his account of the scandal that has a critical bite to it, Steel calls the

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beginning of that letter "a gem of an understatement." In November 1937, with his own divorce almost final and Helen preparing to go to Reno, Lippmann also wrote a letter to Armstrong. His former friend refused to read it, however, and in the thirty-five years that remained to him as editor of *Foreign Affairs* he never again permitted Lippmann's name to appear in the magazine.

THE characters in *The House of the Prophet* who comment on the affair between Leitner and Gladys Satterlee, the wife of Leitner's closest friend, the stockbroker Heyward Satterlee, are as impatient with the clichés of romantic love as Steel is content with them. Thus Fiona Satterlee, the daughter of Heyward and Gladys, would have hooted at any account of the affair that did not acknowledge her mother's manipulativeness. Right from the start, in Fiona's opinion, Leitner had been "largely Mother's victim," a man more to be "deplored . . . for weakness than condemned for housebreaking." Gladys was an independently wealthy, socially ambitious woman who was willing enough to maintain her first marriage until an internationally famous intellectual came into her lion-hunting sights. Unlike Steel's book, Auchincloss's permits us to glimpse the cold calculations that may have underlain a middle-aged woman's seemingly reckless passion.

But the most searing condemnation of Gladys comes from Roger Cutter, who is horrified by the psychological damage she inflicted on her first husband when she selected his best friend as her lover, whereas Steel lets what Helen Armstrong did to her first husband when she took up with Lippmann go completely unjudged. While Heyward Satterlee has had a much less impressive career than Hamilton Armstrong did, Cutter's words catch the agony of both men equally well:

> Felix's friendship represented to Heyward the distinguishing aspect of a life otherwise banal, the proof that there could be in a poor stockbroker's soul something that a genuis could, not only recognize, but value, like the deep red glow that the observer at last begins to make out in the somber grays and black of a Rothko canvas. Heyward could have forgiven Gladys any lover but Felix. For her to take his friend was not simply an act of adultery, it was a kind of murder.

Only Cutter's uncritical devotion to Leitner prevents him from being able to admit that Leitner was a partner to that crime. There will always be "a relentless few," Cutter uncomprehendingly complains, who will speak of Felix Leitner as "the man who had betrayed his best friend and then tried to explain it in a beautiful letter."

The House of the Prophet, then, does not blink at any of Felix Leitner's terrible faults. Yet the novel also insists on his greatness. Walking with the columnist through the Carnavalet Museum in Paris, young Fiona Satterlee rejoices in his great personal gift of "making each chapter, even each paragraph, of life complete and interesting in itself." Once you let his extraordinary intellect encompass your problem, Fiona says on another occasion, he will "bathe you in the sparkling stream of an understanding that is greater than any kindness." And in contrast to Steel's life of Lippmann, which never comes close to doing justice to the literary artistry of Lippmann's columns, *The House of the Prophet* pays exquisite tribute to Leitner's journalism. His columns were all the same length, says Roger Cutter,

> almost to a word count. They usually fell into three sections: the statement of theme, a marvel of clarity and conciseness; the basic discussion, which contained the essential literary part, sometimes dramatic, sometimes rhetorical, sometimes almost poetic, a brief but exhaustive exercise in alternative arguments and points of view; and finally the conclusion, usually framed in a Leitner paradox. Felix dealt ordinarily with foreign affairs or government news, but he also noticed great events, such as the moon landing or the cure for polio, or the obituaries of famous men, and every six months he would compose a piece on what he once described to me with a dry smile as the "eternal verities." There was something of La Rochefoucauld in his method; as the great Frenchman strove to catch life in epigrams, so did Felix seek to hammer his columns into reflections of the essence of the political scene.

On the one hand he was an emotional monster; on the other hand he was an intellectual saint. The dichotomy is instructive, but the novel finally goes beyond it. A woman named Julie Pryor, who had acted as Leitner's hostess in the years after his second divorce, insists in the closing pages of the book that saints—"except perhaps Saint Francis of Assisi, and the tales about him were probably made up, anyway"—*are* monsters. Leitner's singleminded devotion to his craft and the celebrated disinterestedness of his judgments were the flip side of his heartlessness.

Through its reconciliation of the light and the dark sides of Leitner, the novel once again deepens our understanding of the historical personality on whom he is modeled. The man who did not hesitate to break the heart of Hamilton Fish Armstrong was also impervious to the blandishments of the most adroit political flatterers of our time. Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, and Lyndon B. Johnson were very charming men in their various ways, and they all did their damnedest to put America's premier columnist in their pockets. They did not succeed. At times, Lippmann's expressions of disappointment in their political leadership seemed merely willful, as, for example, when he said of Kennedy in the summer of 1961 that he had failed in the role of "popular teacher." For what was Kennedy if he was not a rhetorical President? The initial failures of his regime had much more to do with his lack of attention to the cloakrooms of Capitol Hill than with any inability to communicate with the people. But far more often than not, Lippmann's emotional detachment worked in impressive combination with a powerful intellectual analysis. He was both the coolest and the smartest Washington reporter we have ever had.

INASMUCH as Ronald Steel's pre-

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vious work as a writer has been in the realm of political analysis, one would expect that he would be at his best in demonstrating how remarkably well Lippmann's political commentaries have stood the test of time. Steel, however, is an ideologue whose approach to the issues of 20th-century American politics is as predetermined as Lippmann's was exploratory. Consequently, the biographer's admiration for the columnist's acumen is constantly subject to frost. Whenever a Lippmann opinion conflicts with one of the Left-liberal political myths by which Steel has always sworn, the biographer covertly brings the offending columnist to task by remarking that that opinion was certainly a disappointment at the time to the men of good will among his readers. Where a dispassionate biographer might find cause to praise Lippmann for his independent-mindedness, Steel is moved to disparage him.

In 1927, for instance, the glory of Lippmann's commentaries on the Sacco-Vanzetti case was that he tried to figure out the facts for himself and refused to hunt with the liberal wolfpack headed by Felix Frankfurter and Heywood Broun. When the three-man review panel appointed by Governor Fuller of Massachusetts and headed by President Lowell of Harvard confirmed the jury's verdict of guilty and refused to recommend a new trial, the liberal outcry was ferociously *ad hominem*. Lippmann, however, bravely hailed the panel's report for its "fairness, consideration, shrewdness, and coolness." Shortly thereafter, he beat a partial retreat from this position and demanded that the panel show why the prejudice of the trial judge should not require a new trial, but he continued to resist the insistence of the liberal intelligentsia that Sacco and Vanzetti were no more capable of committing murder than Jesus Christ. After the execution, Lippmann again sought a middle ground. While praising Frankfurter and the defense committee for their readiness to uphold the rights of the humblest and the most despised, he also congratulated the Lowell panel for suffering a disagreeable duty bravely and for being willing to face danger to get at the truth. When Steel informs us that some of Lippmann's liberal friends were "puzzled" by this opinion and that others were "openly contemptuous," he is letting us know how he himself feels. If, however, Steel had bothered to acquaint himself with the Sacco-Vanzetti scholarship of the last twenty years, he would know that there is increasing support for the view that although Sacco and Vanzetti probably deserved a new trial, they probably were guilty of the crime for which they were executed. Lippmann's measured opinions, in sum, look a good deal better today than do the passionate intensities of Frankfurter and Broun.

But as the antiquated citations in his footnotes attest, Mr. Steel is not acquainted with recent Sacco-Vanzetti scholarship. Indeed, he is not even conversant with the undisputed facts of the case. The two men, he says, "were picked up in 1920 for distributing anarchist literature and accused of murdering a payroll clerk." But a guard as well as a paymaster was murdered in the hold-up, and Sacco and Vanzetti were not picked up by the police for distributing anarchist literature. They were arrested while riding on a streetcar and they had no such literature in their possession. What caught the attention of the police was that the men were heavily armed.

In addition to admonishing Lippmann for his departures from Left-liberal orthodoxy, Steel also tries to make him over, in the final years of his column writing, into a Left-liberal hero. Perhaps the columnist's "finest hour," he proclaims, was his opposition to the Vietnam war. But by what criterion was this a finer hour than his refusal to hound the Lowell review panel? Or than his willingness in 1936 to brave the excoriation of the Left and vote for Landon, on the grounds that another Democratic landslide at the polls would be bad for the country and bad for FDR? Even if Lippmann had gone on to prophesy that in the wake of smashing victory a power-drunk President would attempt to pack the Supreme Court, I am quite sure that Steel would still have given his finest-hour award to Lippmann's columns on Vietnam, and the reason for my confidence is simple. Steel is, first, last, and always, a 60's writer. No other era in American history bulks as large in his present-centered mind as that turbulent decade. The statement about Lippmann and the Vietnam war is a statement about Steel's badly delimited and highly ideologized sense of history.

Clearly a proper biography of Walter Lippmann remains to be written, but it will be a long time, I suspect, before anyone undertakes the task. Although Ronald Steel has not done enough work to do justice to his subject, he has done enough to spoil it for other writers. Which is all the more reason to be grateful to Louis Auchincloss for his remarkable novel.

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Singing the Same Old Songs

Pearl K. Bell

*Joshua Then and Now** is Mordecai Richler's eighth novel, but it so closely resembles his seventh, *St. Urbain's Horseman,* which came out in 1971, that it's often hard to remember who said and did what in which book. In structure the two novels are identical, cutting back and forth in time with cinematic rapidity between the main character's childhood and adolescence in the St. Urbain Street Jewish ghetto of Montreal, his adventurous young manhood in Europe, and the way he lives now, in hard-earned fame and affluence. Both books are dominated by the same brash and funny voice, that of a tough, witty, rueful, uneasily intellectual Jewish wiseguy who regards his professional success, his happy marriage, his handsome children with unbelieving awe. A lifelong guilt-collector, he is tormented by neurotic dread that the sweet comfort of his middle years will at any moment and for no good reason be shattered by a bolt from the evil eye.

In *St. Urbain's Horseman* he was a television and movie director named Jacob Hersh. In the current book he is a sometime historian (of the International Brigade in Spain), a sportswriter and "TV personality" (that demeaning euphemism) named Joshua Shapiro. But the two characters are patently one and the same edgy, sardonic Jew from a working-class family, who, like Mordecai Richler, departed the colonial wasteland at a tender age, and spent many expatriate years in London. Joshua Shapiro, also like Richler, came back to Montreal some time ago, with mixed feelings of regret and relief, and settled in the city's Westmount section, once the restricted dominion of Wasps and now as densely inhabited by nouveau-riche Jews as Scarsdale. Both Jake Hersh and Joshua Shapiro are married to beautiful Gentile women, and they are both torn by fierce ambivalence toward Jews and toward themselves as Jews.

In *St. Urbain's Horseman,* however, Jake Hersh's inability to come to terms with his Jewishness is conveyed as a credibly honest if nettlesome strain in his tempestuous personality, and it takes its toll in a chain of misjudgment and recklessness that lands him in the Old Bailey on a sex charge. Because Richler kept a skeptical distance between himself and his fictional creature, he endowed Jake's irritable equivocation about Jews with a wry authenticity that was neither dismissive nor self-serving. But the sticky business of Jewish self-denial seems to have gotten out of hand in *Joshua Then and Now,* perhaps because Richler knows too well that there is nothing new to be done with the old love-hate routines, with the Jewish lust for *shiksas* and the Jewish intellectual's disdain for the hustling Duddy Kravitzes of his childhood world. And so he has tried to invigorate the exhausted manners and morals of Jewish naturalism with some of the manic grotesquerie of literary wild men like Stanley Elkin. But the violent outrageousness of black humor does not come naturally to Richler, whose comic ingenuity has always flourished within the plausibilities of conventional realism.

In *Joshua Then and Now,* the raffish parents are forced to carry the burden of Richler's flirtation with the art of the absurd, and though they are indeed an affront to conventional notions of Jewish family respectability, they seem more outlandish than absurd. In Joshua's boyhood, his father Reuben, a former lightweight champion of Canada, bootlegger, and muscle man for the mob, was always vanishing mysteriously—into jail, as his son would learn much later, or hiding out with gangster pals. His mother, Esther, was the shame and disgrace of the neighborhood, but "the more she was socially scorned, the greater was her defiance, the back-yard laundry line serving as her banner of rebellion. While immense cotton bloomers and outsized bras flapped worthily in the wind on other clotheslines, sassy little black bras and lacy black panties . . . danced wickedly on theirs. Right out there in the back lane, where husbands setting out the garbage could look up and swallow hard." What Esther yearns to become is a queen of burlesque, and she practices her bumps-and-grinds on a captive audience of one—young Joshua, whistling and stamping his feet on cue as Mama wriggles to the saucy rhythms of "Snake Hips." But Richler cannot leave well enough alone, and flogs the anti-Jewish-mother joke to death. Not only does Esther entertain the boys at Joshua's bar mitzvah with a striptease, but she is still going strong in her sixties, running a massage parlor in Winnipeg, acting in skin-flicks, and finally graduating, a reformed sex-object, to women's lib.

None of this is very funny—it's too labored and lacks Richler's old *tummler* exuberance—and neither is Reuben's dubious concern about his son's religious ignorance ("We're Hebes you and me, and don't you forget it"), which he undertakes to remedy in beery Bible classes in the back yard. By the time Reuben has gone ten rounds with the Book of Job, he has pummeled its moral into an earthy pulp: "If you continue to believe in God, even when you're up shit's creek, it can pay off double at the window."

Though Joshua understandably

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acquires little in the way of Jewish wisdom from Reuben's exegeses, Richler would have us believe that our hero somehow grew up with as intractable a load of Jewish-intellectual guilt and anguish as his properly educated friends. Even his marriage to the high-born, honey-haired, long-legged Pauline, daughter of a Senator who had been in Mackenzie King's wartime cabinet, does nothing to mitigate Joshua's sour obsession with what Richler grandly calls "the weight of his Jewish heritage." It's hard to grasp just what that heritage amounts to for this tough-cookie son of a bootlegger and a stripper, beyond a resentful pride in his "Jewish" ineptitude at "goysy" pastimes like tennis: my heritage can beat your heritage. This is vintage Richler, of course, but along with the noisy arrogance there is an unexpected reliance on sentimentality in *Joshua Then and Now.*

THE streak of softheadedness is most freely indulged in the Spanish episodes of *Joshua Then and Now,* where Richler's serious intentions are presumably played out. For his generation, Joshua reminds us, the Spanish Civil War made that country "a territory of the heart. A country of the imagination. . . . Not so much a received political idea as a moral inheritance." (Never mind that we are not told just how the street-tough Joshua found his way to such political ardor.) As a feisty young man knocking around Europe in the early 50's, Joshua had eventually settled on the island of Ibiza, where memories of the Civil War were still very much alive, the wine cheap, the peasants brave and true and straight out of Hemingway. But after Joshua tangled with a demented German whom his fevered imagination had inflated into a Nazi devil (and in the process jeopardized a new hotel owned by aging Jewish refugees), he was forced to leave the enchanted isle, and for the next quarter of a century nurses smoldering dreams of penance and revenge. Whenever the action flips back to Spain, a finger pokes us to notice how gravely Richler has reflected on the persecution of the Jews throughout the centuries. But there is a kind of double standard at work here, as Richler exploits feelings he does not hesitate to ridicule maliciously elsewhere.

The trouble is that Richler can't take the Jews, but can't seem to leave them alone either, and this has been clear in his work all along. By now, though, the chronic shuffling from love to hate has gone on for too long, and a lot of the jokes are turning rancid. True, the manic comedy still works sometimes, as in the descriptions of the annual meeting of the William Mackenzie King Memorial Society, when Joshua's gang of Jewish jesters gathers to pay homage to the dotty Prime Minister of Canada who believed that Hitler "will rank some day with Joan of Arc among the deliverers of his people." Yet even this fun-and-games sounds after a while like a high-school reunion: Remember how Izzy Singer tripped his burglar alarm with a bowl of chopped liver?

On the one hand, Richler wants to earn points for his immunity to Gentile condescension—when his prim father-in-law inquires about the Shapiro family traditions, Joshua shoots from the lip: "We do not take shit from anybody." On the other, we are expected to applaud his savage skewering of Jewish arrivistes like the psychiatrist Jonathan Cole (*né* Yussel Kugelman), author of *Your Kind, My Kind, Mankind.* Sure it's funny, but so many Jewish novelists and comedians have rung so many changes over the years on the same kind of joke that it's not unreasonable to want something less hackneyed, less puffy with self-gratulation. Richler has not bothered to think hard and long enough about the divided soul of Jews like Joshua (and himself) or taken the trouble to understand just what manner of men, beyond the antic comedy, he means them to be. And so Joshua never becomes a fully realized human being, but remains a slapdash collage of Richler's private phobias, wisecracks, crotchets, vulgarities, and sentimental memories. With all his infectious vitality, his deft deflation of stuffed shirts and sanctimonious liberals, Richler never makes us feel, in *Joshua Then and Now,* the living force of an uncomplacent mind. The strident voice overwhelms everything else.

E. L. DOCTOROW, who was born in the same year as Richler—1931—did not publish his first novel, *Welcome to Hard Times,* until 1960. Fifteen years later, Doctorow's fourth book, *Ragtime,* brought him the kind of success that serious novelists rarely enjoy. Not only was *Ragtime* a huge seller, but it was virtually canonized by the critics, and the few dissenting voices—Hilton Kramer's in these pages, Greil Marcus's in the *Village Voice*—were all but drowned out by the hallelujah chorus proclaiming *Ragtime* a masterpiece that provided a stunningly fresh assent to the radical disaffection with America which engulfed the society during the Vietnam war. By wrapping his ideological fable for the 70's in a deceptively pretty turn-of-the-century package, Doctorow pandered to every modish piety of his own time—America the Decadent, the sexist repression of women, the racist oppression of blacks, and the sinister power of American imperialism—while seeming to be engaged in nothing more than a charming exercise in nostalgia for the vanished simplicities of yesteryear.

But it took a while for the polemical design of the book to yield itself with unmistakable clarity. What was remarkable about the book's initial reception, as Hilton Kramer observed, was the reviewers' seeming blindness to the novel's political objective, which he attributed to the fact "that our culture is now so completely permeated with the myth of American malevolence that an ambitious political romance like *Ragtime,* which distorts the actual materials of history with a fierce ideological arrogance, is no longer in any danger of being recognized as having a blunt political point."

If the reviewers had looked back at *The Book of Daniel,* the novel Doctorow published four years before *Ragtime,* they would have realized that no matter what disingenuous games he played in *Ragtime* with historical figures manipulated as literary inventions, or

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with the domestic appurtenances of middle-class New Rochelle at the beginning of the century, this writer regards himself above all as a political novelist. *The Book of Daniel* was an account of the Rosenberg case as told by their grown son, who is certain of their innocence, and unequivocally committed to a conspiratorial view of his parents' trial and execution and of the "totalitarian society" that singled them out for martyrdom. In his didactic zeal to spell out these convictions, Doctorow expanded the Rosenberg drama with ironic lectures on such things as "The True History of the Cold War" and the hidden function of Disneyland as a training ground for the control of potentially dangerous crowds. Though the political argument of *The Book of Daniel* would hardly have been offensive to liberal readers of 1971, the style was more devious and self-consciously literary than the simple declarative rhythms of *Ragtime,* and failed to exert the direct appeal of the sugar-coated ideological tale that, four years later, opened the floodgates for E. L. Doctorow.

But what does a novelist do for an encore when such phenomenal success is behind him? It is a recurrent problem in American literary culture. Some novelists are struck dumb by extravagant celebration, but others, like Norman Mailer and William Styron, accept that the onus is now on them to come up with something new and different. So with Doctorow, who has now written a novel, *Loon Lake,** that is remarkably unlike anything he has published before. Yet not even by the most generous standards can it be called a remarkable novel. It is difficult at first to get any clear sense of what he is trying to do, and the mannered incoherence and stylistic confusion are in sharp contrast to the sleek, bright assurance of *Ragtime.* Though *Loon Lake* takes place in the 1930's, during the American Depression, and deals in several chapters with the labor strife of the period, the political themes one might expect are almost always sounded with weary indirectness, and only at the very end—on the very last page, in fact—can we fully grasp Doctorow's polemical intentions.

The narrative proper covers several picaresque years in the life of a young roughneck from Paterson, the son of wretchedly poor mill hands, who runs away from home, joins a gang of hobos, becomes a carnival roustabout, and stumbles accidentally onto Loon Lake, the vast Adirondack estate of the steel tycoon F. W. Bennett. One of the old industrialist's toys is a gangster's moll who sneaks out of Loon Lake with Joe, and the two settle down for a while in a steel town owned by one of Bennett's many companies. She leaves him, and Joe goes back to Loon Lake, is taken in by the old man, and that is literally the end of the story, except for a fraudulent last page whose extraordinary revelations have no plausible connection with the rest of the book. Doctorow makes only perfunctory stabs at endowing any of the characters with a semblance of life. If Joe is deliberately conceived as a cipher, like the cardboard figures of *Ragtime,* we are given no hint, until the end, of the idea, political or otherwise, he is meant to embody.

It is not the thin story, however, that betrays the desperation behind this baffling performance, but the ostentatious structure Doctorow has devised to fatten his undernourished tale. The adventures of young Joe are repeatedly interrupted by mysterious computer printouts supplying biographical data on the various characters or offering elaborate rationales for the sins of capitalism. Eventually we realize what lies behind this printout device: the ubiquitous computer that knows all and tells all is Doctorow's symbol for the dehumanized technology of a military-industrial world, the tyrannical machine that overwhelms its operators and reduces the entire culture to unfeeling statistics; the computer becomes the mechanical master of a mechanical world devoid of justice or human emotion.

In addition to the all-knowing computer, Doctorow also strews the narrative with elaborate verbal tricks, puns, pseudo-poetic doodling, and signals leading nowhere. For instance, in the computer-printout biography that concludes *Loon Lake,* we are told for the first time that the full name of the hero is Joseph Korzeniowski. This jolts us awake, since Korzeniowski was the real name of Joseph Conrad, but since there is not the remotest connection between Doctorow's novel and Conrad, the name must be taken as a whimsical in-joke signifying nothing. The book is full of incomprehensible pranks like this, dropped into the story at random to lend it an air of experimental, "modernist" daring. There are also run-on sentences, stream-of-consciousness monologues, typographical games, and every so often ruminations in the author's own voice about strikes, the Depression, the Ludlow mine disaster of 1914, and the irredeemable rottenness of American civilization.

If a good deal of this seems familiar, it is no accident. The unacknowledged ghost of John Dos Passos—the brilliantly innovative Dos Passos of *U.S.A.*—haunts just about every page of *Loon Lake.* Doctorow's computer biographies are a weak imitation of the portraits—of business magnates, political leaders, labor heroes, intellectuals, and scientists—that Dos Passos juxtaposed against the unheard and unremembered lives of the poor in Depression America. But while the Dos Passos biographies convey a living sense of history through the men who shaped and changed the American scene, Doctorow's printouts provide only unassimilated facts that have no bearing on a unique historical moment. Doctorow's Joe, the poor but ambitious mongrel who grabs whatever life throws in his path, has more than a few counterparts in *U.S.A.* And Doctorow's failed poet, Warren Penfield, is in many respects reminiscent of Dos Passos's Richard Savage, the spoiled idealist and poet corrupted by the main chance. The impressionistic commentaries of the "Camera Eye" in *U.S.A.*—the voice of Dos Passos—are also paralleled in Doctorow's ironic and bitter soliloquies, written in the monotone of computer language, indicting "the industrial Western democracies"

* Random House, 272 pp., $11.95.

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for "the tendency of legislation to serve the interests of the ruling business oligarchy the poisoning of the air water . . . the obscene development of hideous weaponry the increased costs of simple survival the waste of human resources. . . ."

In such passages the computer is turned into an ideological instrument tapping out its message about the evils of present-day American society, but they sound like nothing so much as a throwback to the agit-prop radicalism of the 1930's. Doctorow is determined to resist any counterrevolutionary suggestion that anything has changed for the better over the course of the last half-century. But since he fails to enrich his judgment with anything like the immediacy Dos Passos achieved with his technical experiments, *Loon Lake* conveys little more than the author's hortatory ineptitude.

For it is only on the last page of the novel that Doctorow finally reveals the key, and by then it seems more preposterous than illuminating. The ubiquitous computer is hauled in for one last sinister printout, and as it taps out the bare facts of Joe's life, we learn that he was adopted by his capitalist benefactor, went to an Ivy League college, and served in the OSS during the war. As the computer clacks along, disgorging its data, we finally come to the kicker: "Appointed organization staff Central Intelligence Agency 1947. . . . Continuous service Central Intelligence Agency to resignation 1974. Retiring rank Deputy Assistant Director." And—aha!—there we have it, the worm in the apple, the hidden theme of *Loon Lake*: the corruption of the American working class by the evil forces of wealth and power.

Clearly Doctorow has nothing new to add to his old radical litany. Trapped in the simpleminded futility of his political dogmas, he is doomed to sing the same old songs over and over again.

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Books in Review

The Good Fight

PHILOSOPHY AND PUBLIC POLICY. By SIDNEY HOOK. *Southern Illinois University Press. 288 pp. $17.50.*

Reviewed by WERNER J. DANNHAUSER

THE earliest essays in this collection date back to 1945, while the latest include scathing attacks on such current follies as reverse discrimination in university admissions and hiring practices. Taken as a whole, the volume offers the reader an overview of almost 35 years of the public career of Sidney Hook as a thinker and as a political polemicist. Whatever else one may say of that career, its sheer energy and intensity compel admiration. A selection like this, however, is bound to pose difficulties of evaluation, as the twenty-one essays were written in different times and places, for different audiences, and in a variety of contexts. Perhaps the best way to approach such a book is in terms of the diversity and unity it exhibits.

The diversity manifests itself primarily in the range of topics Hook is able to discuss with competence and even ease. The "public policy" to which the title refers covers both domestic and foreign policy of almost every kind. Thus one can learn here about the problems of our involvement in Vietnam; the dangers posed by Soviet imperialism; the difficulties India faces as well as the probability of Vinoba Bhave's lasting impact on that troubled land—and much else. Hook feels equally at home with the analysis of Supreme Court decisions, the debate concerning the proper balance between freedom and other goods, the exposition of John Dewey's philosophy, and the subtleties of criminal law. He discusses with aplomb the writing and actions of such diverse figures as Justice Douglas, Leon Trotsky, T. S. Eliot, Bertrand Russell, Lillian Hellman, Arnold Toynbee, and Alger Hiss.

Notwithstanding its variety, *Philosophy and Public Policy* also demonstrates great unity. To begin with, Hook speaks with a voice unmistakable and unique. I am not referring to the manner of his writing: he is always clear and always employs language that does the job, but even his most fervent admirers would hesitate to call him a great stylist. The voice is a trademark, rather, because it consistently manifests certain qualities of mind and heart.

The predominant characteristic is probably moral courage. Fittingly enough, Hook admires it whenever he finds it in others, and bemoans its absence in many places where it is sorely needed, especially our universities. And Hook himself embodies the virtue he praises. At a time when it was dangerous to an intellectual's reputation to do so, he defended Trotsky against Stalin's false accusations, though his mind remained free of subservience to Trotsky's dogmatic Marxism. He took on Arnold Toynbee when the latter was basking in well-nigh universal acclaim. And he has in recent years been among the most relentless critics of reverse discrimination, refusing to be intimidated by accusations of racism and sexism. He is not always right but he is always willing to state his views and to suffer the consequences of his outspokenness. Such consequences have included long periods of virtual ostracism from the intellectual community whose fundamental values he has upheld while taking vigorous issue with some of its passing enthusiasms.

But one has not characterized Sidney Hook precisely enough by pointing to his courage alone. He is not only happy to state his convictions; he loves to argue them. This book is, as it were, stained with blood he has drawn, for he is a born debater and a formidable adversary. Though he has set up tough rules which he thinks should be followed in disputations—in an essay entitled "The Ethics of Controversy," which attempts to banish McCarthyism from the life of the mind—and almost always adheres to them, he also knows how to use a whole arsenal of weapons against positions he detests. Hook is masterful at spotting shoddy logic and a genius at introducing a telling historical detail. For example, in dealing with the fallibility of political judgment among philosophers, he mentions that Whitehead, Russell, Dewey, and Santayana all hailed the Munich settlement of 1938; disposing of Lillian Hellman's disingenuousness on the Communist issue, he is able to throw in for good measure the all but forgotten fact that when Joseph McCarthy first ran for the Senate he was supported by the Communist party.

IN THE last analysis, however, what makes Hook effective is neither his skill as a debater nor his imposing fund of knowledge, but rather the comprehensive and thoughtful view of politics and public affairs which he has developed over the years. No all-embracing "system" of politics adorns—or encumbers—these pages, but the positions Hook articulates are all of one cloth.

Sidney Hook is a social democrat who thinks of democracy as much more than majority rule; it is, rather, a way of life and a moral phenomenon. And he believes that the superiority of the values of democracy can be established objectively. This, for him, is in fact the major task of philosophy, which must steer the difficult course between a relativistic skepticism that leads to nihilism and an abstract doctrinalism that leads inevitably to fanatical intolerance.

The democracy Hook supports is not, according to him, tied to any particular economic system. He continually distinguishes between the political and economic spheres, insisting on the primacy of the former in all decisive respects. He thus maintains that a good deal of socialism is compatible with a good deal of democracy, so long as

WERNER J. DANNHAUSER *is professor of government at Cornell, and a frequent reviewer in these pages.*

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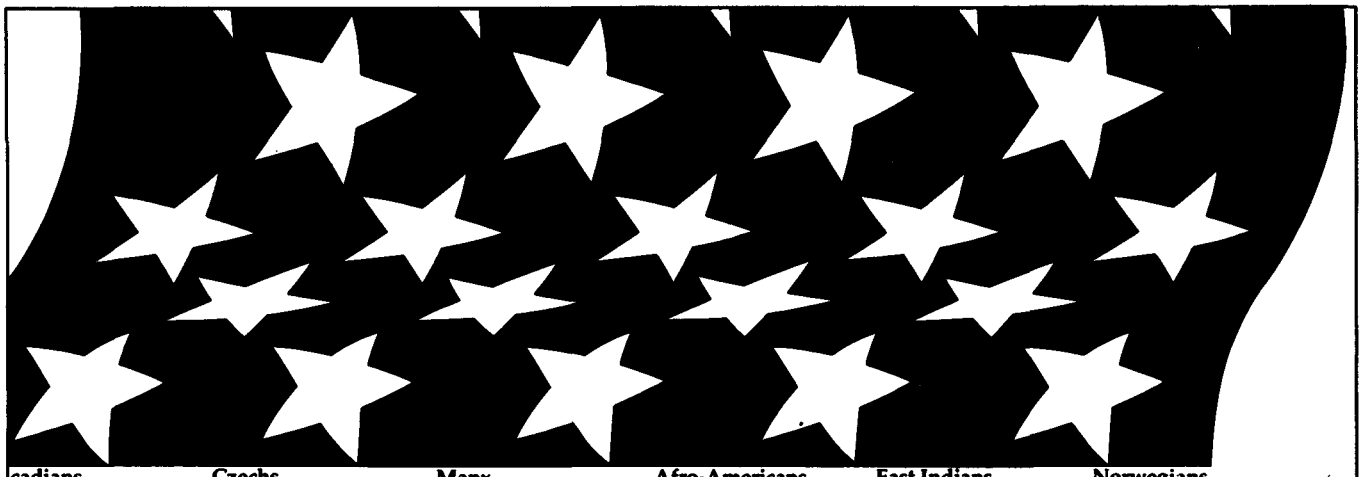

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proper safeguards for a private sector are maintained and the country takes care to balance goods that may conflict with each other.

The notion of *balancing* informs much of Hook's political thinking, especially his prudent and judicious assessment of liberty. He understands that freedom is enhanced rather than diminished by law, and that it must be balanced by due regard for other goods. The right to heresy is almost sacred to him, but when speech spills over into deeds calculated to overthrow legitimate regimes, when it curdles into conspiracy, a society has a right to curb it. Similarly, a love of justice must at times be balanced against the need for survival, the rights of criminals weighed against the rights of victims, and even truth-telling balanced against the imperatives of kindness.

The United States lives up to some, though by no means all, of the standards for a good society entailed by the above views. On balance, Hook's America is not a utopia but a country worth respecting, improving—and defending by war if need be. He has little patience with those who deny the usefulness and justice of our opposition to Soviet totalitarianism simply because we have domestic vices to combat. After all, these did not detract from either the necessity or the correctness of our fight against Hitler.

WHEN ONE is done agreeing with much or all of Hook's practical political positions, and admiring his devotion to them, one remains curiously uncertain whether one has understood Hook in the way he wishes to be understood. This is because of the philosophy in *Philosophy and Public Policy*. Hook asserts that his essays "illustrate the application of a philosophical standpoint commonly called pragmatism" or, better, "experimental naturalism." One must doubt that they do. Rather, a series of arguments like these could be produced by a shrewd and humane man of *any* philosophical persuasion. Hook appears at his most disappointing when he dons the robe of the philosopher. Even his references to other philosophers such as Hobbes and Marx—the latter

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praised for his "democratic ethos" —tend to be dubious.

What is more important, the philosophical foundations for some of Hook's major contentions seem rather shaky. Consider, for example, his arguments in favor of human rights. Hook tries to show that these rights are more than arbitrary suppositions, but what is their ultimate ground? He refuses to derive them from any "presuppositions about the nature of man," nor does he think they stem from a divine source (Hook, indeed, appears to be a bit tone-deaf when it comes to the music of the spheres). To avoid caprice, he resorts to John Dewey's notion that we can judge human rights and other values objectively because actions have consequences. But he never informs us how we are to achieve or formulate the standards by which to assess those consequences. It is hard to see how Hook avoids the problems that beset the ethics of his mentor, Dewey, whose stature as a thinker he probably overestimates.

To be sure, Hook has written a number of books dealing with the problems I have raised. Besides, it may not in the end matter all that much whether or not one agrees with his philosophy. Hook himself admires Solzhenitsyn, whose ontology he deplores. In like manner, those of us who are not experimental naturalists can be grateful to Hook for the good fight he has waged for so many years against the forces of intellectual and political darkness, and is waging still today at the age of seventy-eight.

By Bread Alone

THE LEAN YEARS: POLITICS IN THE AGE OF SCARCITY. By RICHARD BARNET. *Simon & Schuster. 349 pp. $12.95.*

Reviewed by ELLIOTT ABRAMS

THE myth of the Third World would seem to have fallen on hard times. Oil-exporting nations refusing to help their impoverished

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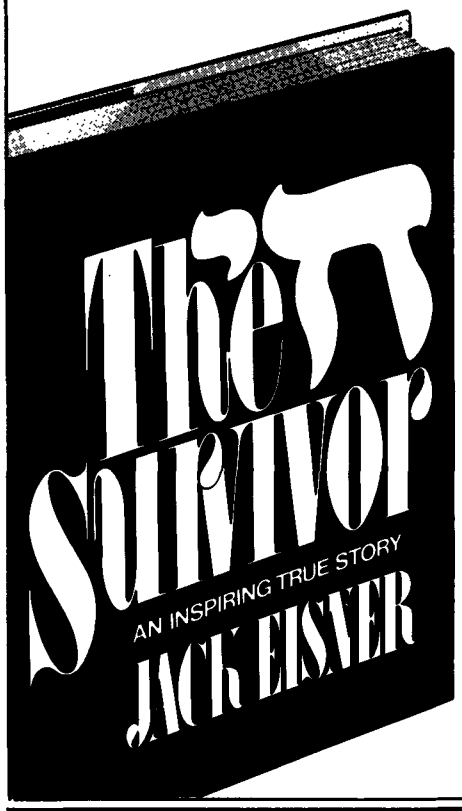

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brethren; economic misery persisting despite the application of every principle of socialist planning; murderous dictators like Amin, Macias, Castro; the widespread absence of elementary personal freedoms; the palpable maldistribution of resources within countries ostensibly devoted to economic justice—all this has contributed to undermining the once popular view that the Third World is a repository of virtue suffering only from external oppression by the rich, conservative Western nations.

Those who study the data on political and economic development go even further. In general, it turns out, those Third World nations which have aligned themselves with the West are the freest, and those which have adopted capitalism show the fastest economic development. Thus, whereas Communist China is the poorest and most repressive ethnic Chinese nation in the world, economic growth has enriched the people (not just the ruling clique) of the other three ethnic Chinese nations—Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong, which have rejected the socialist model of central planning and state ownership.

To defend the older, romantic view of the Third World is, then, no easy task, yet it is a task that has been assumed willingly if not eagerly in recent years by Richard Barnet. *The Lean Years: Politics in the Age of Scarcity* is probably the best that can be done with the old myths, for Barnet has an agile mind and wide experience with the politics of the Third World. This is, indeed, the Gospel according to the Institute for Policy Studies, of which Barnet was a co-founder and of which he remains co-director. If Barnet is not the official ideologist for the Left on matters of world political development, his voice is certainly representative.

It is not difficult to summarize the argument of *The Lean Years*, for its core is simple: world population will soon outgrow world resources, and nations will face a struggle over food, oil, land, and water. Either we will all share these resources, or we will all die fighting over them. Barnet writes that "If

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we cannot develop a democratic planning system to touch these issues historians will doubtless conclude that our [American] experiment lasted barely two hundred years." The alternative to destruction is a new set of social arrangements, which may have to be brought about violently: "Whether the redistribution of power, the precondition of the redistribution of resources, can occur without a huge escalation of revolutionary warfare is dubious."

Fundamental to this argument is the idea that the role of power is to hang onto wealth. Here Barnet takes the traditional Leninist approach to "imperialism," according to which the West is rich because the Third World is poor, and vice versa. The relationship between Western and Third World economics is one of simple exploitation. This is perhaps the weakest link in Barnet's chain, for he simply ignores or explains away the mountain of evidence on economic growth in the Third World, particularly the remarkable success of Taiwan and South Korea at creating and distributing wealth.

In Barnet's view, wealth is something consumed, not produced—hence his emphasis on the necessity of redistribution. It is clear from *The Lean Years* that this emphasis also determines his view of our natural resources, which he sees as finite and fast depleting. He denies, despite much evidence to the contrary, that significant new oil or gas deposits will ever be found, and he rejects out of hand the possibility that nuclear power, although technically feasible, will ever be made safe enough to provide for our energy needs. All this is a necessary step toward claiming that the only alternative to world catastrophe is fundamental social and political change.

The time has come, writes Barnet, for the market economy to give way to a "more powerful political vision." He does not embrace the old models of centralized planning and wide-scale nationalization, but trendier versions of each. Key concepts for him are decentralization and localized control. He advises "maximum feasible self-reliance of nations and regions" in food; "within U.S. agriculture, too," he writes, "local and regional self-reliance should be promoted."

In this leaning toward localism, Barnet deviates from the traditional position of the Left. His Malthusian approach to resources is also un-Marxian for, as he notes, Marxism was based on a vision of coming abundance. Yet his prescriptions for our imagined ills—the "Age of Scarcity" in which all our resources are fast disappearing—are familiar enough. "The key to democratic planning is democratic control of capital." "More explicit planning is needed to manage the flow of scarce resources." "Public governance of local resources" is required. Thus, despite his bows to decentralization, Barnet's views on the direction of necessary political and economic change come down to state control and more state control. He even acknowledges what, in the Age of Scarcity, such a "political vision" would entail for human liberties: "without the myth of abundance, distributive justice becomes impossible without massive coercion." (Although Barnet makes this comment specifically about Marxist societies, it would apply *a fortiori* to any society that followed his prescription for the future.)

BARNET argues for the transformation of the social order with a modernized version of the carrot and the stick. The old Marxist pairing was class warfare as the threat, and humanism as the reward. In Barnet's vision, international warfare over scarce resources has replaced class warfare over the means of production. As for the reward, he offers redemption through politics: the new order will cure "the lack of connectedness to the future" we feel in the "special restlessness that permeates industrial culture." Today, under our present system, "there is no answer to the inescapable human question: Why am I here?" But if we turn to "sharing and cooperation" we can live "in psychological and ideological harmony with the rest of creation." The book concludes with the sentence, "The task of politics is to give expression to these yearnings so that institutions can be created

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to enable people to do what they know they must."

Barnet labors hard to adapt both the threat and the promise of Marxism to our new age. To this end he builds a complex structure which combines some apocalyptic rhetoric, some romantic anti-industrialism, not a few factual errors, a refusal to deal with unhelpful data, an earnest style, and just enough Left pieties to make anxious followers feel at home.

But for all the sophisticated analysis in Barnet's book, in the end it serves to obfuscate rather than to illuminate the most profound issue of our time, which is not the struggle over resources but the struggle between East and West over the survival of freedom. It is in the context of that enduring and now critical struggle that the true character of Barnet's analyses and recommendations finally become recognizable. Despite the appearance of scholarly distance and detachment which he tries hard to maintain, Barnet's "vision" leads down familiar paths to a world where freedom cannot survive.

Two Lives

HELEN AND TEACHER: THE STORY OF HELEN KELLER AND ANNE SULLIVAN MACY. By JOSEPH P. LASH. *Delacorte. 811 pp. $17.95.*

Reviewed by DOROTHY RABINOWITZ

WHEN SHE was seven or so, Helen Keller returned from a drive in the country and in sign language proceeded to give her family an enthusiastic description of the scenery. "I don't see how anyone is ever to know," wrote Anne Sullivan, who served as the eyes and ears of her deaf, mute, and blind pupil, "what impression she did receive or the cause of her pleasure in what was told her about it. . . ." It was a question that was to recur repeatedly in one form or another throughout Helen Keller's lifetime, asked by skeptics and admirers alike. What, actually, was the nature of the sense impressions about which Helen Keller discoursed with facility and with so much seeming pleasure—the real meaning to her of the "muted hoof of the wild deer in the woods," the gorgeous vistas and colors invoked in the reports of her travels and much else she wrote?

This question, which might justifiably have been asked of not a few Victorian writers with their faculties intact, was an inescapable one in the case of Helen Keller, blind and deaf since her nineteenth month. However much Helen basked in the world's admiration, as she did virtually from girlhood to the end of her life, controversy about her real capacities continued throughout her career as a writer, a lecturer (in time and by dint of enormous effort, her muteness was partially overcome), and a public figure. Her prose was thick with imagery, invented or repeated from all that she had read, all that had been told her. When she referred, in a ripe prose passage, to "the shoulder of the moon that turned pink," one literary critic wondered what pink could possibly mean to one who had never seen the color. And when she insisted on the deep pleasure she derived from music, to which she "listened" by means of vibrations transmitted through her fingertips, even friendly observers concluded that Helen had become a dupe of words and that her aesthetic enjoyment was largely a matter of self-suggestion.

Helen Keller had an answer to these doubts, as did a number of experts who had studied her case: empathy, intuition, and insight, they averred, allowed her to "see" in a way that was not merely different from but—inevitable corollary—also superior to that of normal sighted persons. No doubt Helen Keller was, in addition to being an emblem of hope to the world at large, a boon to that body of opinion which is ever ready to uncover proof of the ways in which the infirm are superior to the healthy.

HELEN KELLER'S transformation from an unruly child, constrained to live in near total isolation, to an articulate and celebrated figure is a

DOROTHY RABINOWITZ *is the author of* New Lives: Survivors of the Holocaust Living in America.

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story too well known to recount here. Yet Helen Keller herself remains a subject shrouded in mystery—one about which little can ever be known, perhaps, and one, certainly, on which Joseph Lash sheds no light—that mystery being what the real nature was of the inner world that was her whole world.

Of the face shown to the outside, we know much: she was steadfastly sunny, her temper uncomplaining, her enthusiasms limitless, her political ideals the highest. She wrote about these ideals voluminously and in so doing revealed more about herself than do all the pages of her autobiography. An activist and deeply autocratic, she waged a fierce campaign against advocates of military preparedness prior to World War I—a program she described as a J.P. Morgan plot. A proud sympathizer with the radicalism of her era, she embraced the socialists, the Bolsheviks—and also the cause of Francis Bacon as the true author of the plays that history had benightedly assigned to Shakespeare. Her public jibes at Theodore Roosevelt and John D. Rockefeller as war-mad and bloodthirsty gangsters, her rousing speech at a New York City rally in which she declared that the working men of America had no reason to fight for the flag and had nothing to gain from the war but "a change of masters," brought down on her the wrath of a number of editorialists. The New York *Herald* commented acidly that since talking was a newly discovered art to Helen Keller, it mattered little that she talked of things about which she knew nothing. In a similar vein, *Life* magazine pointed out that Helen Keller and Henry Ford —who had organized a peace ship called the Oscar II—were both imperfectly equipped to see the whole of life. With a crudity that was the equal of Helen's, *Life* observed that as a blind leader of the blind, she belonged with Henry's crew.

Such hostile journalistic response was, to be sure, not the kind of treatment to which Helen Keller was accustomed. She had made conquests of all who met her and of those who had only heard of her. Even during a visit to Japan on the

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eve of World War II, when that country was an armed camp bristling with hostility to Westerners, she managed to captivate the Japanese. Mark Twain and Alexander Graham Bell were devoted to her, and Andrew Carnegie pleaded for the honor of providing her and her teacher with funds, a request Helen refused with some hauteur on the grounds that her socialist conscience would not permit her to accept money from plutocrats. (It was a decision she would think better of shortly, when money became a problem. At that point she asked for and received a sizable donation from Carnegie.) All told, the only notable who failed to be impressed by Helen Keller was—perhaps not surprisingly—that other agitator for socialist ideals and brotherhood, George Bernard Shaw, who grudgingly consented to receive her in England and then greeted her with the insulting observation that not only she but all Americans were deaf, blind, and dumb.

Throughout her life, the sole relationship of depth and endurance was the one she had with her teacher, Anne Sullivan, who first taught her the meaning of words and then goaded her on to the academic and literary accomplishments which were Helen's earliest claim to fame. Proponents of affirmative-action programs today might well study the section in Lash's book on Helen's entry to Radcliffe, whose officials, concerned to insure that it was Helen Keller's merit as a scholar, and that merit alone, which was being judged, saw to it that she enjoyed no special benefits as a result of her infirmities. College authorities even objected to having the entrance examination read to Helen by her teacher, thus forcing Helen to struggle through the exam on her own, part of it in a new Braille notation which she had had just two days to learn.

After she entered Radcliffe, the dean hired two proctors to oversee Helen's exams, one to proctor the student and the other to proctor the first proctor. Whatever her difficulties in meeting the school's rigorous standards, she carried a full schedule, excelling in some courses and succeeding in fulfilling the requirements of a Radcliffe degree, a triumph that strengthened her and reinforced the habit of striving. This habit, which was constantly being stimulated and abetted by Anne Sullivan, her exacting, ambitious teacher and alter ego, provides a key to the enormous enthusiasm that was the hallmark of her public career, and perhaps of her soul as well. In rendering the relationship between these two, Lash has illuminated two of the more memorable lives of the age.

Of Terror & Trade

OF BLOOD AND HOPE. By SAMUEL PISAR. *Little, Brown. 311 pp. $12.95.*

Reviewed by JEFFREY MARSH

SAMUEL PISAR is an international lawyer best known for his tireless advocacy of trade between the Soviet Union and the West. Only by increasing the volume of such trade, he argues, will the Soviet Union be induced to modify its behavior, and become an acceptable member of the community of nations. A survivor of two years under Communist rule in Poland, and four years under the Nazis, Pisar claims to have no illusions about the nature of totalitarianism, or Soviet intentions. If he advocates détente, it is not, he insists, out of wishful thinking, but rather because in his view it is the only alternative to a nuclear war that would annihilate civilization. So strong are his feelings that Pisar has now written an autobiography in which he draws upon his Holocaust experiences to underline this point. Gripping though it is as a document of personal survival, the memoir is somewhat less convincing as a foreign-policy brief.

Pisar was born in 1929 in Bialystok, a middle-sized Polish city with a flourishing Jewish community. In 1939, the vibrant Jewish life of that city came to an end as World War II broke out and Bialystok, by the terms of the Hitler-Stalin pact, fell to the Russians. In the two years that followed, young Samuel re-

JEFFREY MARSH *writes on energy and public affairs for a variety of journals.*

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ceived a steady dose of Stalinist indoctrination at school, and was at first impressed by the seeming dynamism of the new Soviet society. Then in 1941, Hitler's army attacked; and the swift collapse of Soviet defenses as well as the speed with which formerly loyal Communists changed their allegiance revealed the crumbling structure behind the ideological façade. For the Jews of Poland it was the end; fewer than 2,000 of the 50,000 Jews of Bialystok were to survive the war.

Those who were not killed outright were herded into the ghetto, and it was here, under conditions of unspeakable privation, that Pisar celebrated his Bar Mitzvah. When the time came to liquidate the ghetto, men still capable of work were separated from women and children, marked for immediate extinction. Pisar's mother, sensing what lay ahead, dressed him in long pants and sent him out with the men. She herself perished along with Pisar's younger sister and father, who was tortured to death by the Gestapo for attempting to smuggle children out of the ghetto.

Over the next four years, Pisar managed to survive through a combination of luck and resourcefulness. When children, on one occasion, were being offered extra rations of white bread and milk, he kept himself forcibly from joining them, thus evading one selection for the gas chambers. A second time he cheated death by pretending he could work a button-holing machine, talking his way into a group of tailors bound for a slave-labor camp. Yet again, on the very threshold of the gas chamber, he picked up a broom and bucket, pretended he was an orderly, and mopped his way out of the room. By dint of such stratagems Pisar managed to keep alive long enough to witness the allied liberation of Europe. One day in 1944 an American tank rolled across a German field and Pisar emerged from the bushes to greet it: a sixteen-year-old skeleton screaming the three English words his mother had taught him a lifetime before: "God bless America."

That same determination which helped keep Pisar alive in the

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camps has served him equally well in the years that followed. Emigrating to Melbourne in 1946, he devoted himself zealously to making up for the formal education he had missed, and learned English well enough within a very short period to win a scholarship to the University of Melbourne, where he eventually earned a law degree. This was followed by a Ph.D. at Harvard for a massive study on the legal aspects of trade between the Communist and capitalist worlds. After several years with UNESCO in Paris he returned to Washington where he took a congressional staff job and became closely involved in shaping the foreign-trade policy of Kennedy's New Frontier.

In the early 60's Pisar opened a law office in Paris and became enormously successful as an international lawyer specializing in multinational corporations—an ideal vantage point from which to pursue his private dream of contributing to a gradual moderation of the inhuman regimes of Eastern Europe and ultimately the Soviet Union via the liberating effects of trade. For a while, Pisar found his hopes rather widely shared as the politics of détente flowered in the early 1970's. More recently, however, his views have come under considerable challenge, thanks to the general economic situation in the U.S., the shocks administered by OPEC, and the mounting aggressiveness of Soviet behavior. Still, Pisar continues, from his position as a supremely successful multinational insider, to argue the case for East-West trade.

In the present volume he carries the argument even further, attempting to make his unique personal history serve as a somber backdrop to his view that the alternative to removing East-West barriers is a regression to something resembling the barbarism of forty years ago. But the attempt fails. For one thing, his descriptions and analyses of actual political situations seem oddly off center and naive, especially for a man of his considerable experience in the ways of the world. Writing about Australia in the early 1950's, for example, he describes the country as a bastion of old-world courtesy and gentleness, in contrast to the United States, where he found ruthless competition and a shocking McCarthyite climate. Not only does this compliment to Australian manners fly in the face of reality (an old joke describes an Australian as a man who calls a spade a bloody shovel) but it totally ignores the fact that Australian politics in those years was dominated as much as was American politics by the issue of Communism, with a hard-fought referendum over a proposed constitutional amendment to outlaw the Communist party, a scandal involving a spy ring operating out of the Soviet embassy, and an opposition party destroyed by the issue.

This is perhaps a peripheral point, but it illustrates Pisar's penchant for ignoring awkward considerations which would interfere with

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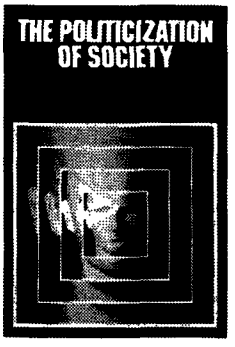

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Edited by Kenneth S. Templeton, Jr.

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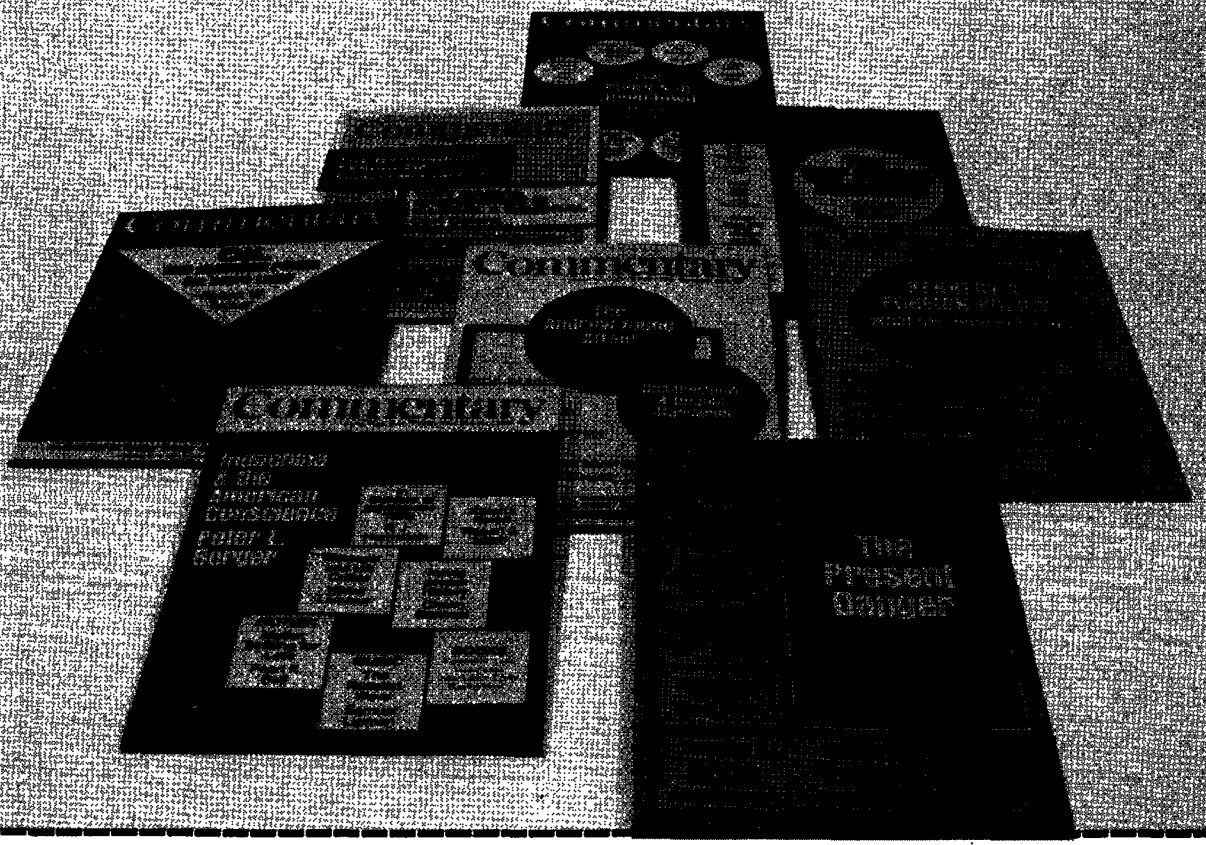

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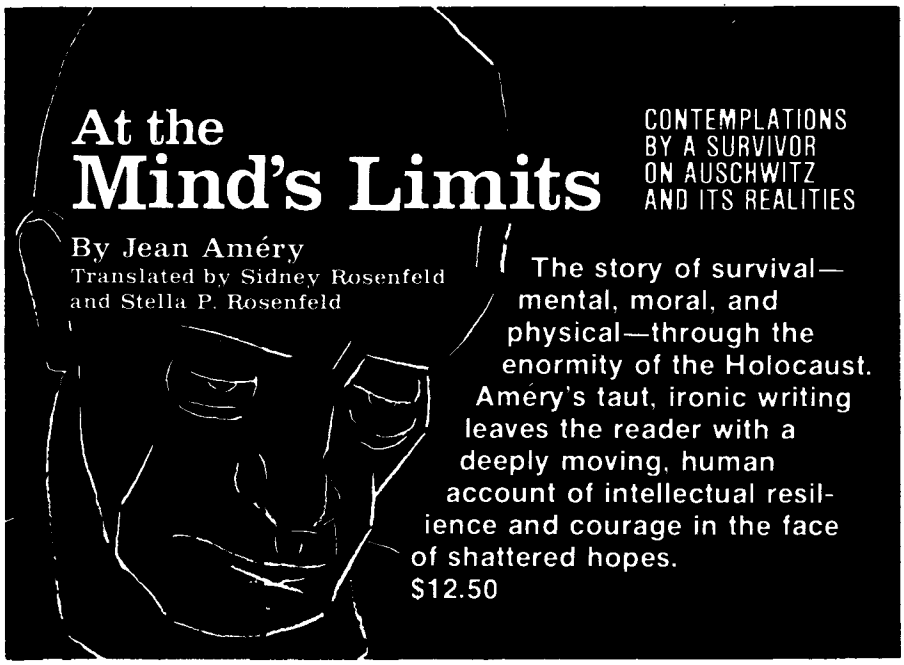
his rhetoric. Other illustrations are found in his outright condemnation of the Vietnam war, with no reference to the victims of totalitarianism; in his assertion that a continuing arms race must lead to a nuclear Armageddon, unqualified by any discussion of the real issues which must be faced before meaningful arms-control measures can be enacted; and in the crude economic determinism underlying his explanation of how Nazism triumphed in Germany.

Pisar urges the West to invest huge amounts to develop Siberia's mineral and petroleum resources in order to reduce the dangers of conflict over Persian Gulf oil. But he does not consider that this policy might well provide an incentive for the Soviets to encourage the oil-producing nations to become even more intractable. He offers a grim example of the dangers of partnership between private enterprise and dictatorships in the wartime exploitation by I.G. Farben of slave labor, yet he fails totally to address the even more taxing problems which would arise should democratically elected governments make their economic welfare, and hence their political survival, hostage to trade with totalitarian governments. Unfortunately, such problems cannot be solved simply by allowing men of good will on each side gradually to build up mutual confidence, as Pisar would have it.

Pisar's life bears witness to his sincerity, but sincerity is unfortunately no guarantee of correct analysis. The fundamental point driven home to Pisar by his own experience is that the structure of civilization is fragile indeed; it does not follow, however, that the way to protect the fragility is to befriend those who would destroy the structure.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The Orwell Enigma

ORWELL: THE TRANSFORMATION. By PETER STANSKY and WILLIAM ABRAHAMS. *Knopf. 302 pp. $12.95.*

Reviewed by RENEE WINEGARTEN

THERE remains something elusive and enigmatic about George Orwell, despite his own numerous autobiographical writings and allusions (about which the reader is well advised to be wary). He still seems to guard his secret, after the vivid reminiscences of those who knew him well at various times (or thought they did), and notwithstanding the plain, "no nonsense" persona he learned to project in transparent prose. Even the two-volume biographical study by Peter Stansky and William Abrahams—*The Unknown Orwell* and now *Orwell: The Transformation*—while affording fresh glimpses, does not contrive to remove the veil.

Since Orwell made it plain in his

RENEE WINEGARTEN *is the author of* Writers and Revolution *and* The Double Life of George Sand.

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will that he did not want a biography of himself to appear, clearly there were areas of privacy he (legitimately?) wished to protect, depths of inner life he did not desire others to plumb. At considerable cost, he had made himself anew —like other writers who have found a new voice along with their pseudonym. Painfully thin, in creased writer's garb, he no longer even looked like the smooth, chubby young Etonian, Eric Blair, or the smart imperial policeman-in-uniform. He was undemonstrative, in accordance with the stoic code inculcated before 1914 at home and at school; he liked to have friends (whom he kept in separate compartments) rather than intimates; and often gave the impression of being a perfectly ordinary chap. Within, he was deeply wounded and, as it would turn out, one of the most extraordinary Englishmen of modern times.

The biography presented by Peter Stansky and William Abrahams is ostensibly limited in aim. The first volume examined Eric Blair's early years up to the publication of *Down and Out in Paris and London* in 1933 under the pseudonym that he would make famous. The second, *Orwell: The Transformation*, deals with the period of struggle–as schoolteacher, part-time bookseller's assistant, village shopkeeper, reviewer, novelist —which culminated in his active service on the Aragon front in the Spanish Civil War, and the writing of that shattering work of reportage, *Homage to Catalonia*. These two volumes complete the authors' project, initiated with their *Journey to the Frontier*: an inquiry into why such talents as John Cornford, Julian Bell, and Orwell himself fought in Spain.

Their study thus leaves Orwell on the threshold not only of his wider fame but of the controversy that surrounded and continues to surround him, thirty years after his death from tuberculosis at the age of forty-six. A work that does not present Orwell as a living challenge seems a little like *Hamlet* without the prince.

The two biographers have nevertheless performed an important service in separating fact from myth. Scrupulous, detached, they are cautious about the thorny problem of class and about their subject's motives. Orwell could be proud, resentful, bitter, wrong-headed—but he was neither detached nor cautious. The biographers' tone is grave when their subject could be sardonic (after all, the title of *The Road to Wigan Pier* contains a typical North Country joke); it is studiously bland where he was prickly, deliberately provocative, and daring to the point of rashness. Orwell lived in an age when generous enthusiasm (mistaken or not) was pursued at personal risk and all too often with fatal results for the enthusiast. It is the high-minded exaltation in the mood of the 30's as well as its deadly oppressiveness that seems to be missing from their staid portrayal of the period.

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What made the excessively fastidious Orwell choose the tough option? It may be readily supposed that at first the urge to experience the lower depths lay in a desire for adventure as well as in some deep inner compulsion to touch bottom. When on vacation from Eton, he wrote to a friend with considerable satisfaction about a night spent sleeping rough: " . . . I feel I *must* tell you about my first adventure as an amateur tramp. Like most tramps I was driven to it." (In fact, he had enough money to stay at the YMCA if he went without food.) He would always seek out the course endowed with what he would later call "alluring disadvantages," the side which it did not pay to join.

BORN in 1903, the scion of an upper-middle-class family that was striving to maintain its social position and privileges on limited means, he suffered humiliation at a snobbish prep school. This humiliation still rankled even in later life, such was the extent of his pride. Orwell would squirm with self-disgust when he recalled how, as a small boy, Blair had toadied to people in authority whom he cordially hated. He had wanted to be a writer from an early age. Like so many writers, he would create less out of happiness than as a release from secret misery and angry frustration. Taking Thomas Carlyle's personal unhappiness as a symptom of egoism, Blair the reviewer could comment on "the spleen of the *unconscious* egoist." It was no doubt such egoism that he would spend his life trying to subdue and to punish.

Some casual act of bullying or brutality as a policeman in Burma, some momentary abuse of power—these were what he felt he must expiate on leaving the service. His years engaged in the dirty work of empire convinced him that imperialism corrupted both rulers and ruled. It was partly to soothe his bad conscience as well as to seek literary copy that he took to disguising himself in old clothes and making periodic forays among the down-and-outs he had been taught to despise. Here was a test of character. Dreading rats, he went where he was most likely to find them. His quest was for self-abasement (rather like T.E. Lawrence's, for whom he cared little, in the RAF). Disguise is always a kind of adventure. Yet if Kipling, a favorite author of his boyhood, could make the white boy Kim pass successfully as a "native," Blair was never taken for anything but "a gentleman down on his luck."

After only six months of happily married life, Orwell left for Spain where he volunteered—by chance rather than choice—for the revolutionary Marxist POUM militia. It should not be forgotten that he was at school during World War I, whose long shadow also fell upon those much younger than himself. In Spain, he felt he could make up for what he had missed. The wound he suffered there was to render him unfit for military service in 1939. But his experiences in the Spanish Civil War, and especially the web of Communist lies about the POUM, the cruel persecution and purge of its members, turned him into the Don Quixote for truth who became so troublesome to the legion of praters and self-deceivers, so hated by some and admired by others.

Eventually, the all-too-human author of *Animal Farm* and *1984* would figure for his admirers as "a hero of our time," the intellectual conscience of his generation; "a virtuous man," indeed, not far short of a saint; the very model of honesty, decency, and integrity. The reaction inevitably followed. In a petulant aside, Kingsley Amis (himself a lesser proponent of the "no-nonsense" attitude) declared as early as 1955: " . . . I often feel I will never pick up a book by Orwell again until I have read a frank discussion of the dishonesty and hysteria that mar some of his best work."

With good cause, fellow travelers of various hues together with militant Communists have continued to detest the brilliant polemicist who revealed so many of the skeletons in their closet. More strange, some twenty years after his death, Orwell could be made into a banner to be waved or torn asunder. Thus, while Norman Mailer could quote Orwell in support of his own opposition to United States policy in Vietnam, Mary McCarthy could launch an ill-humored attack on the writer of *1984* who (she ventured to suppose) would have endorsed American involvement in the Vietnam war. No doubt Orwell's patriotism, which some now find embarrassing, would have led him to scourge any fellow countrymen of his who committed misdeeds, but he could never have regarded his own country as the epitome of evil. Such a metaphysical concept of country would have been alien to him. Besides, his sense of honor would have precluded it.

THERE are still some today who, for different reasons, would like to diminish Orwell. In overemphasizing his literary aims and his late development in practical political matters, Stansky and Abrahams may well help to provide these interests with ammunition. In one sense, everything may be seen as political; in another, Orwell never strictly adhered to any political orthodoxy. His true sphere was that of moral responsibility. An idiosyncratic socialist—fundamentally, with momentary aberrations, a radical reformist—he tried to preserve what had been good in the society he denounced. He made impassioned attacks on the side he called his own, and indulged a very English tendency to look for some virtue in the side he was opposing. Naturally, he was not always right, but he was often right in the main general principle.

Many of the battles he fought have not yet been won. To the last he ardently defended humane, democratic values and the Western liberal tradition not only against creeping totalitarianism but against constant denigration from within. His was the rare moral courage to cry out against injustice even if it meant "playing into the hands of" the enemy—which it usually does. He adopted a moral tone in the defense of democratic politics and society which is no longer in vogue, and which it would be wise to try to recover.

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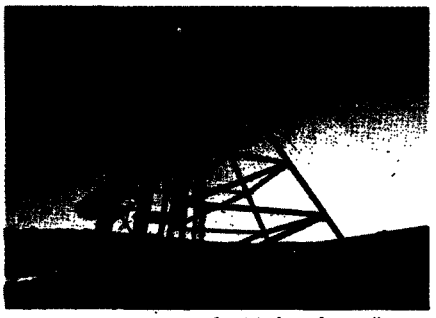

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